

JALĀL ĀLE AHMAD,

WRITER AND POLITICAL ACTIVIST

by

Robert Wells

Thesis submitted to the University of Edinburgh for the
Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Faculty of Arts,
May, 1982.



ABSTRACT

The opposition writer and activist Jalāl Āle Ahmad (1923-1969) lived through a period of great economic, social and political change in Iran. Brought up in a strongly religious family background, he broke away, and in 1944 joined the Tudeh Party, and then continued his political activities with the Toilers' Party and the Third Force until the coup of 1953. In the subsequent repressive political atmosphere, he continued his political activity through his writings.

The works *Gharb Zadegi* and *Dar Khedmat Va Khiyānate Rowshanfekrān* form the core of his political critique of Iranian society under the Pahlavis. In those works he criticises the economic, political and cultural exploitation of Iran by the west, and suggests a revised role for the Iranian intellectual and the religious authorities in the preservation of the Iranian cultural whole.

As a writer and political activist, writing was a form of political activity for Āle Ahmad. Consequently, in his articles, stories and novels, he reflects the opinions and ideas developed in his political tracts. Thus his fiction, and in particular the works *Modire Madraseh*, *Nun Va'l Qalam* and *Nefrine Zamin*, form part of his political critique based largely on his own experiences in Pahlavi Iran.

Āle Ahmad's writings, then, are his personal political statement. It is a statement which has found a ready and sympathetic audience in Iran. Through his life and his writings, therefore, an outsider may gain an insight into many of the issues and problems facing contemporary Iran, and into the world of the Iranian urban radical intellectual.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PREFACE	iii
TRANSLITERATION	vii
CHAPTER 1 THE EXPERIENCE	1
CHAPTER 2 GHARB ZADEGI	40
CHAPTER 3 RELIGION, THE RELIGIOUS AUTHORITIES AND THE IRANIAN INTELLECTUAL	94
CHAPTER 4 ĀLE AHMAD AND THE ROLE OF THE WRITER AS A POLITICAL ACTIVIST	135
CHAPTER 5 RESISTANCE AND ALLEGORY	155
CHAPTER 6 RESISTANCE AND REALISM: MODIRE MADRASEH	199
CHAPTER 7 RESISTANCE AND REALISM: NEFRINE ZAMIN	234
CONCLUSION	267
BIBLIOGRAPHY	274

PREFACE

The idea of writing a thesis on Jalāl Āle Ahmad came to me when on a visit to Iran in 1976. By that time I was already interested in modern Iran, and my experiences there provoked me to try and find a source of Iranian criticisms of that society; a critical view through which a stranger might catch a glimpse of what modern Iranian society was like from the inside. With the limited freedom of expression allowed under the former regime, clearly the job could not be done through the normal channels of political expression - those of meaningful parliamentary debates, political party discussion, or indeed open individual discussion. Thus, despite my historical background, and with some misgivings, I decided to look for a writer who expressed political opinions. Jalāl Āle Ahmad was the obvious choice. A writer of novels, short stories and political tracts and articles, he was involved in the course of events in Iran from the early 1940's until 1969; as a writer and political activist, not as a maker of events. Thus it is through his eyes that some aspects of contemporary Pahlavi Iranian society may be experienced and understood.

The sources for this thesis are primarily Jalāl's own writings. His unpublished works have, since the revolution, been readily available, although there is a vast amount of written material in the custody of his trustees, Simin Dāneshvar, Shams Āle Ahmad, and Parviz Dāriyush, to which I have not had access. In addition, there are a number of

articles written by Jalâl's friends, family, acquaintances and critics published in various journals, newspapers and books, the majority of which I was able to track down. The background was provided by the series of journals and magazines of the period, and, where they could be found, political pamphlets. Finally, I conducted a series of interviews in Tehrân between October 1979 and December 1979. Unfortunately, that was a stormy period in Iran, and not only were many of the people I interviewed naturally more concerned with current events than with those of the past, but it was also a difficult atmosphere in which to conduct academic research. Therefore, my field work was of short duration, and as a result, the biographical content of the thesis is not as complete as I would have liked.

The thesis takes a wide view of Jalâl, the period in which he lived, and his writings. It is not a comprehensive survey, but selects the major themes and analyses his most important works. Chapter 1 deals with the historical background, and mixes an outline of his biography with some detail of his political experiences. There are further historical and biographical sections in all the chapters at the appropriate points. Chapter 2 analyses the content of his important critical work *Gharb Zadegi*, and relates it to his own personal and political background. Chapter 3 concentrates on his view of religion, dealing with *Dar Khedmat Va Khiyânate Rowshanfekrân*, and his approach to religion as found in some of his stories, and with *Khasi Dar Miqât*. Chapter 4 bridges the gap between the writer as a political activist and as an artist. Chapter 5 considers the use of

allegory by Āle Ahmad as a form of resistance, concentrating on Sar Gozashte Kanduhā and Nun Va'l Qalam, while Chapters 6 and 7 examine Jalāl's attempts to resist though a realistic though fictional presentation of his experiences in the works Modire Madraseh and Nefrine Zamin. The approach in the thesis as a whole is historical and political. There is no attempt at literary criticism, nor serious consideration of his innovative style of writing. The short stories, articles and translations have not been given separate consideration but have been introduced as and where they added to the major themes under discussion.

I would not have been able to write this thesis without the cooperation of many people. I would like to thank Simin Dāneshvar, and to apologise for the intrusion. It is my greatest regret that I was not able to return and see her a second time. I am also very thankful for the assistance extended to me by Shams Āle Ahmad, 'Ali Dehbāshi and others at Ravāq publishing house. I would particularly like to thank Dr. Jahānbaglu, Dr. Vosuqi, Jamāl Mir Sādeqi, and Gholām Hosseyn Sā'edi for variously putting me right, and many others whose patience I sorely tried at a difficult time.

I am equally grateful for the academic advice and encouragement received from Professor Elwell Sutton and Dr. John Gurney; for the occasional guiding hand of Professor A.K.S. Lambton, with whom I first found my interest in Iran; and for the invaluable insights of Homā Kātuziān. I can only acknowledge my debt to the British Institute of Persian Studies, which provided me with consistent financial support both here and in Tehrān, and in particular thank David Stronach,

Martin Charlesworth and Mary Gueritz for much practical and moral support.

I would also like to thank the staff of Durham University Oriental Library, and I am indebted to Susan Hugo-Hamman, for typing the thesis so accurately and quickly.

Finally, this thesis owes a great deal to the support, patience and humour of my good friend Dr. A.R. Navàbpur, of Durham University.

TRANSLITERATION

The transliteration system used in this thesis has been devised by Dr. A.R. Navâbpur. It is simple and practical.

The system of transliteration of Persian names, titles, and words is intended to reproduce their modern pronunciation but not their spelling in the Perso Arabic alphabet, which can only be done through the laborious use of diacritical points. For readers acquainted with Persian, diacritical points would be unnecessary, and for others, meaningless.

Words which have become naturalised in English, such as Islam, Imam, vizier, bazaar, are spelt in accordance with the correct English usage; but compounds which include these words, such as Emânzâdeh, bâzâri, are transliterated in accordance with the same system as other Persian words.

In this system, the long vowels of Persian are represented by â, u, i, and short vowels by a, e, o, and the diphthongs by ey, ow. The nominal and adjectival suffix represented in the Persian spelling by the 'unpronounced h', which in the modern pronunciation has the sound 'e', is transliterated as eh, because this is the usual Iranian practice; but it is transliterated as e when it is followed by a suffix or an ezafeh, as in Khâneye kuchek (the small house).

No distinction is made between the identically pronounced consonants of the Perso Arabic alphabet except that qâf is transliterated as q even though it is pronounced identically

with gheyn, which is transliterated as gh. While Iranians usually write Ghâsam or Ghom, English speaking readers will probably find these names more recognisable as Qâsem or Qom.

Ch, gh, kh, and sh normally represent single consonants as in English church, French mari (gullural r), Scottish loch, English shine; but in a few instances gh may represent g followed by h; kh may represent k followed by h; and sh, s followed by h. Hamzeh and 'eyn are both transliterated by the apostrophe ' because in modern Persian both represent the same glottal stop.

TO SIMIN DĀNESHVAR

CHAPTER I

THE EXPERIENCE

In October 1923, Rezā Khān was elected Prime Minister of Iran. Supported by the army, and with the acquiescence of a section of the religious authorities, and in the face of considerable opposition from the Majles, he was crowned Shāh in early 1926. Rezā Shāh, his son Mohammed Rezā Shāh, and the governing establishments surrounding them formed a regime which dominated Iran for the next 53 years, ruling on the whole autocratically, and dragging Iran through the most controversial period of history since the Safavid times. A period of great social and economic change; of new ideas and new values; of foreign intervention and occupation; of visions of Iran's greatness, and of unfulfilled expectations; a period of hopes for democracy and freedom, and a period of failure and disillusionment.

In 1923, Jalāl Āle Ahmad was born in Tehrān, the 4th youngest of 2 brothers and 7 sisters.¹ His family came from Tāleqān, and his grandfather, having first studied in Najaf, brought the family to Tehrān, where he became an Emāme Jam'iyat; Jalāl's father was also a ruhāni.² A healthy, strong man, extremely religious to the point of prejudice, during the constitutional period he was opposed to what he felt were western reforms. He became the Emām of the Pā

1 Āle Ahmad, Masalan Sharhe Ahvālāt, in Yek Chāh Va Do Chāleh. Ravāq 1343 (1964) p.47.

2 Ruhāni means a member of the religious class. It is often translated as clergyman.

Chenār district of Tehrân, where Jalâl was brought up. As the son of a locally respected religious leader, Jalâl was brought up in a position of relative privilege, although his father gave up his position under the restrictions of the power of the religious authorities occurring during the reign of Rezâ Shâh. Concerning his religious background, Jalâl has written;

"My father, elder brother and the husband of one of my sisters died holding the positions of ruhâni. Now a nephew and the husband of another of my sisters are still ruhâni and the rest of my family are all religious - with the odd exception." 3

On completion of his primary education, Jalâl was sent by his father to work in the bazaar, but unknown to his father, he attended evening classes at the Dâr ol Fonun.⁴ At the same time, he attended the Marvi school as a religious student (talabeh). He graduated from the Dâr ol Fonun in 1943,⁵ whereupon he was sent by his father to Najaf to study to become a ruhâni. He stayed for a short while, then abandoned his studies and returned to Tehrân. His stay in Najaf is a curious episode, a subject on which he was clearly reluctant to comment. The only reference to it in his writings is obscure. Describing his first journey to Khuzestân, he writes;

".. That time I went with the intention of studying in Beirut.. and I was going via Khorramshahr to Basrah and Najaf, and then to Baghdâd etc... but I stayed in

3 Ibid. p.47.

4 Ibid. p.47.

5 Ibid. p.48.

Najaf. As a guest of my brother. Until 3 months later I returned in a kind of flight by way of Khāneqīn and Kermānshāh. Fed up and stifled, and turning my back on both my father and my brother. Because on that journey I had seen a trap in the form of a mantle or a cloak ... and this is another story." 6

By the time Jalāl returned to Tehrān, the revival of political and religious activity which had started following the abdication of Rezā Shāh in 1941, was well under way. At this time, there was no progressive religious party, and the only well organised progressive force in Iran was the Tudeh Party. By 1943, it was well established, and was the only party with anything like a nation wide organisation. It was also seen to be the party of the intellectuals. Its leaders had considerable panache. Many were members of the 53 - the group of Marxists led by Dr. Erāni and imprisoned by Rezā Shāh in 1937. In young intellectual circles, in 1943, to have been a member of the 53 was almost a qualification - they were members of an elite, seeming like intellectual cosmopolitan symbols of resistance to a new generation emerging from adolescence into a political and intellectual world free from the constraints of the previous 20 years.

Jalāl attended the Faculty of Literature at the University of Tehrān. His dissertation on the 1001 Nights remained uncompleted, but he became increasingly politically involved. While at the Dār ol Fonun, he had been a member of the Society of Muslim students, and he returned to this organisation after his return from Iraq. The Society was

6 Āle Ahmad; Gozāresh Az Khuzestān, Karnāme-ye Seh Sāleh, Ketābe Zamān, n.d. p.67.

based then at a club in Khiyâbâne Nâsere Khosro, Tehrân. He then became involved in another Islamic Society, the Anjomane Tabliqâte Eslâmi,⁷ and helped with the publications of that group. However, his political interests rapidly widened, and at the end of 1943, he joined the Reform Society (Jam'iyate Eslâh), which had previously been formed in 1941 by Amir Hosseyn Jahânbaglu and a group of friends.⁸ The object of the society was to reform the members on a personal level initially, and then to reform society. The members declared that it was their duty to study different ideologies, and then to report back to the group. Thus, in a superficial way, members studied the political ideologies of all the political groups of the period. Both Jahânbaglu and Jalâl attended Tudeh Party cells and meetings as observers and students for this purpose. They made a brief and shallow study of Marxism, including the Manifesto and a resumé of Capital. Other activities of this society included giving free evening classes to the poor and illiterate, using the premises of a girls school in Tehrân. Jalâl also wrote a wall newspaper for the society,⁹ called 'Andisheh'. There were four or five issues which were handed out at schools.

Through the activities of the Reform Society, Jalâl was moving away from his religious background. Since his return from Najaf, Jalâl's relations with his father had

7 Āyatollah Tāleqāni; in Keyhān, 10th anniversary of the death of Āle Ahmad. 14 Shahrivar 1358 (1979). p.5. Āyatollah Tāleqāni was Jalâl's cousin. They were in frequent contact.

8 Other members were Rezâ Zanjâni, Hushidâr, Abbâsi, Dârâbzand, 'Alinaqi Monzavi. Masalan, op.cit. pp.48-49.

9 Ibid. p.48.

seriously deteriorated, and his activities at the University of Tehrân widened the breach. Both were uncompromising individuals, and when, in April 1944, Jalâl with a group of friends from the Reform Society, joined the Tudeh Party,¹⁰ the breach was so wide that it was not to be filled for 15 years. Left wing secular political activity was an anathema to his father, who subsequently refused to communicate with Jalâl.

There is little doubt that the attraction of the Tudeh Party for Jalâl was due less to the subtleties of Marxist theory, and more to do with the kind of organisation it was. It was progressive, large, prestigious, and the party of the radical intellectual. It was also active, and at that time, effective. Although Jalâl's grasp of theoretical Marxism was, and remained, tenuous, it was nonetheless natural for him to be attracted to the most lively and progressive organisation.

Young intellectuals coming into the party at this time were rapidly promoted. Jalâl was no exception. Within a year he was a member of the Tehrân Provincial Committee, and responsible with Jahânbaglu for the publication of a newspaper called 'Bashar Barâye Dâneshjuyân',¹¹ In the summer of 1946, on leaving the University of Tehrân, he became responsible with Ehsân Tabari, one of the leading Tudeh intellectuals, for the publication of the monthly party magazine Mardom.¹² In this position, he was Tabari's protege, and was starting to make a name for himself. He

10 Ibid. p.49.

11 Ibid. p.49.

12 Ibid. p.50.

had already published some work in the magazine Sokhan, and between the summer of 1946 and the autumn of 1947, he published four more short stories in Mardom.¹³ Fellow contributors included Bozorg Alavi, Ehsân Tabari, Nâder Nâderpur, Sa'id Nafisi, Khalil Maleki and Nimâ Yushij. During this period he also occasionally contributed to the newspaper Rahbar,¹⁴ and for six months was director of the party publishing house Châpkhâneye Sho'levar. He also travelled to Mâzandarân and Gorgân, in the north of Iran, to prepare a report for the party on the events there following the militant Tudeh take over of towns and factories in response to government attacks on the Tudeh Party headquarters in Tehrân. In this way Jalâl quickly reached the middle level of leadership of the Tudeh Party. However, his experiences within the party led rapidly to disillusionment. His idealism came face to face with the realities of political manoeuvring, and in January 1948, he and a number of others left the party in a cloud of invective. The bitterness and mistrust which Jalâl felt towards the Tudeh Party remained with him for the rest of his life.

The events surrounding the Enshe'âb (the split of January 1948) are a little obscure, and have been confused by the amount of invective thrown by each side against the other. In addition, the Enshe'âb has become associated strongly with the name Khalil Maleki, who has been presented as the engineer of the split. This is an over simplification.

13 Lâke Surati, Mehr 1325, Mohite Tang, Khorâd 1326, E'terâf, Mehr 1326, Zendegi Keh Gorikht, Âzar 1326.

14 Masalan, op.cit. pp.49-50.

15 Âle Ahmad, Dar Khedmat Va Khiyânate Rowshanfekrân. Khwârazmi 1357 (1978) Vol. 2, p.191.

It is indisputable, however, that the events of the Enshe'âb, and Maleki personally, had a tremendous influence on Jalâl. Thus it is proposed to look briefly at the life of Maleki, and in some detail at the events of the Enshe'âb.

From 1947, the strongest and most consistent personal and political influence on Jalâl was Khalil Maleki. Jalâl writes of Maleki;

".. one of the advantages of my insignificant life was that I could be in his presence for 20 years, and gain experience from the outcome of his life, and learn from his intransigence."

and he continues;

"I don't know why, but I know there is something which attracts me to Maleki. Because he's always suppressed? Or is it because of his sternness and intransigence? And of course he could have been my father, both from the point of view of age and personality. Perhaps I've made him a substitute for my real father ... But I don't see in Maleki a father or a hero, but a representative of intellectualism left over from the previous generation, who has neither submitted to the evils of cooperation with these governments, nor surrendered to silence in the face of the exploiters." 16

Although they had their disagreements, Jalâl and Maleki remained lifelong friends. Jalâl died 58 days after Maleki, and was buried close to him.¹⁷

Maleki was born in Tabriz in 1901.¹⁸ He was educated

16 Ibid. pp.200-201.

17 Masjed Firuzâbâd, Reyy.

18 Dahomin Sâlmarge Khalile Maleki, text of a speech given by Dr. Amir Pishdâd, Tir 1358 (1979).

in Tabriz, and graduated first in his year. As a result, in 1928 he was sent by the government to Germany, to study chemistry. At the same time he developed an interest in philosophy, economics and politics, and became involved with politically active students in Germany. In 1931, an Iranian student in Berlin committed suicide having been refused financial assistance from the Iranian Embassy. Maleki and a group of fellow students went to the Embassy and demanded an enquiry into the incident, and subsequently criticised the Embassy in the left wing German press. Maleki was branded as a communist and an agitator by the Iranian authorities, and was ordered back to Iran, where he became a schoolteacher.

In Germany, he had made the acquaintance of Dr. Erāni, and he continued his activities with Erāni's marxist group when back in Iran. In 1937, Maleki was one of the 53 marxists imprisoned by Rezā Shāh. He was released with the others in 1941, and he joined the Tudeh Party in 1944. He was a leading figure of the Enshe'āb, the Toilers' Party, and the Third Force. Following the coup of the 19th August 1953, he went into hiding for three weeks, until he was arrested in September 1953. He was imprisoned without trial. After his release, he continued his opposition, often by writing under the pseudonym 'student of social sciences'. In 1960, he founded the 'Socialist League of the Popular Movement of Iran', and continued his political activities with this group until his arrest in 1965. He was then tried with Rezā Shāyān, Hosseyn Sarshār and Alijān Shānsi, for the crimes of being a supporter of Chinese

communism, of activities against constitutional monarchy, and for attempting to form a secret resistance organisation. He was again imprisoned where he wrote his political memoirs.¹⁹ On his release from gaol, he was put under house arrest. He died in relative obscurity in Tir 1348 (June/July 1969). His will specified his wish to be buried next to Dr. Mosaddeq in Ahmadābād. This was not allowed by the government.

Maleki, against his will, had been persuaded to join the Tudeh Party in 1944. By that time there was already a split within the party leadership,²⁰ and it was at the insistence of the Reform Group (the Eslāh Talab), whose members included Kiyānuri, Qāsemi, Tabari, Nushin, Forutan, Khāme'i, Javdat and Ovānessiyān that Maleki joined in time to lead the attack on the 'opportunist' leaders at the First Party Congress in the summer of 1944.²¹ It was already felt that the party had too close an association with the Soviet Union, and the Reform Group had felt the need to reform the leadership of the party. The group met in members houses and finally in the house of Sādeq Hedāyat.²²

The Enshe'āb took place against the background of a general debate within the party provoked by the changing

19 H. Kātuziān, Khāterāte Siyāsiye Khalile Maleki, Ravāq 1980.

20 Keshāvarz has commented on the existence of two factions within the party from the earliest years. F. Keshāvarz, Man Motahem Mikonam Komiteye Markaziye Hezbe Tudeye Irānrā. Ravāq, 2nd.ed. 1357.

21 Khalil Maleki, Bar Khorde 'Aqāyed Va Ārā Beyne Niruye Sevvom Va Hezbe Tudeh. n.d. pp.30-34.

22 Maleki, op.cit. p.30.

circumstances of the years 1944 to 1947. The success of the party up to August 1946, indicated by the election of 8 representatives to the 14th Majles in February 1944, and the cooperation of the party with Qavâm's cabinet in August 1946, accompanied by the controversial issue of party support for the Ferqeh Demokrâtik in Âzerbâijân and for the Soviet oil concession, was followed by a series of setbacks in the form of the failure of the Tudeh Party cabinet members in September 1946, the collapse of the Ferqeh Demokrâtik in December 1946, and the subsequent suppression of the party throughout the country. These events increasingly called into question the independence, judgement and ability of the established party leadership, and caused an internal debate within the party which reflected a crisis of confidence.

The debate concerned on the one hand a division over party organisation and tactics, and on the other hand a struggle for power within the party to implement organisational and tactical changes. There was no serious ideological dimension to the debate. Both sides remained firmly within the framework of Marxism - Leninism, and the first notice announcing the split explicitly stated that the breakaway group 'considers itself the continuation of the course of the Tudeh Party of Iran, in the sense that it has the same ideology, the same principles, and the same intentions.'²³ In addition, however, there was an element

23 Jâmi, Gozashteh - Cherâghe Râhe Âyandeh Ast. Front for the Liberation of the Iranian People. n.d. p.442.

of animosity between the two sides which is perhaps characteristic of not only Iranian politics.

Between April 1945 and January 1948, differences of opinion within the party were expressed relatively openly through various publications. Dr. Eprim Ishaq opened the debate in print²⁴ stating that the party did not have a living theory, nor a positive plan of action, and spent too much time answering the criticisms of others. He accused the party organisation of being weak, and added that the party leadership was not only unadaptable and unprofessional, but also contained unworthy elements. The party paid undue attention to the number of members and the appearances of the party organisation, excessively relied upon the course of international events to lead the party out of any crisis, and had too close an association with the Soviet Union.

The key reform suggested by Eprim was the creation of a wide left wing/progressive alliance;

"That which is important is the creation of a united movement having correct theory, a plan of action, and orderly organisations, for leading all progressive forces and movements of Iran." 25

As the party in its present form was not able to carry out this task, he suggested that the best elements of the party form a vanguard - a tight knit group prepared for the

24 E. Ishaq. Cheh Bâyard Kard. Ordibehesht 1324 (1945). This is an adaptation of Lenin's argument in his 'What Is To Be Done?'

25 Ibid. p.k.

kind of action necessary to lead both the party and other progressives in an alliance in favour of democracy and socialism. The form of the alliance should be a democratic front, and the vanguard should lead from either within the party, or, "if necessary, the party should be dissolved in its present form.

Many of Eprim's criticisms of the party were taken up by Ardashes (Ardeshir) Ovânessiyân, in an article published in Mardom.²⁶ He notes the weakness of the party organisations and lack of discipline, and commented on the lack of cohesiveness and strength in leadership. He called for greater centralisation in the party structure, for party unity, and for a purge of reactionaries, and felt that the quality of party members was more important than the quantity.

Ehsân Tabari also contributed to the debate in two articles published in Mardom²⁷ in which he called for party unity and an improved theory of struggle. He criticised the leadership, albeit mutedly, and described the party as promoting democracy and centralism, and in need of one theory, strategy and tactics.

A detailed critique of the party was given in a pamphlet entitled 'Hezbe Tudeye Irân Sare Dorâh,' produced by a group including Eprim and Jalâl, and containing the views of Khalil Maleki.²⁸ Stating that there is disappointment

26 Âbân 1325 (October/November 1946) year 1. No.2 pp.88-97.

27 Bahman 1325 (January/February 1947) year 1. No.5 pp.1-4. Khordâd 1326 (May/June 1947) year 1. No.9 pp.1-10.

28 Tehrân. Farvardin 1326 (March/April 1947).

and disillusionment amongst the party membership, they accused the leadership of being opposed to changes in the organisation and policies of the party. Like Eprim, they suggested that the leadership placed too much reliance on political events beyond the control of the party;

"The philosophy of a large number of the party leaders can be called 'political fatalism'. The leaders imagined ... the flow of external and internal political events would always be favourable in respect of freedom movements and ... in spite of all the defects of the party, it could be brought to its final success." 29

They added that there was a lack of correct political theory within the party as a basis for struggle, that the party was unready and unfit for the real struggle. A contributory factor to this unfortunate state of affairs was the presence of disreputable people within the party, particularly amongst the leadership. They suggested as the prerequisite of reform, the adoption of the following correct political theory. Emphasising reliance upon the Iranian people themselves, they stated that the establishment rules for the benefit of the upper classes, which are reactionary forces, supporting reactionary parties and the imperialist countries. Progress is only possible when these forces have lost power, and power is put in the hands of the people themselves and their real representatives. Thus the progressive movement must attempt to take over govern-

29 Ibid. pp.46-47.

ment, while the establishment may be expected to resist this with all the means at their disposal, including ultimately, arms.³⁰

The pamphlet then advocated a plan of action based upon this theory, which included the education of individuals, the creation of a vanguard, as suggested by Eprim, a party purge, and the attraction of more party sympathisers by basing a realistic party programme on the real needs of the people.³¹

Although the 'establishment' within the party was largely publicly silent in the face of these accusations and criticisms, the lack of ideological differences in the debate as a whole is confirmed in a pamphlet published in answer to 'Cheh Bâyard Kard' by Eprim and 'Hezbe Tudeye Irân Sare Dorâh.' Entitled 'Dar Râhe Yek Enherâf',³² it amounted to little more than a straight denial and rejection of the accusations. On the question of theory, it stated that the disagreement was over how to compare the theory with the conditions of the time, and not over the theory itself. The anonymous author simply refused to discuss the accusations of corrupt leadership, and strenuously denied links with "another country". On membership, the pamphlet took a firmly disciplinarian approach, stating that the condition for party membership must be acceptance of the whole of the party constitution. Finally the pamphlet dismissed Eprim's proposal of the formation of a van-

30 Ibid. pp.51-52.

31 Following the split, Khalil Maleki repeated these criticisms of the party in a pamphlet called 'Do Ravesh Barâye Yek Hadafe.' Dey 1326, (January 1948).

32 Âbân 1326, (October/November 1947).

guard as a sectarian idea, which showed contempt for the talents of the exploited masses.

Thus there was no ideological dimension to the debate within the party. The debate was over the structure of the party; its organisational state; and the questions of tactics. Although the matter of links with the Soviet Union was of great importance, it was a question of degree, not of political alignment.³³ The Enshe'âb took place against the background of this general debate within the party. The conflicting opinions centred on a power struggle, the object of which was to implement, or to prevent the implementation of, structural and tactical changes.

The mounting dissatisfaction within the party from spring 1945 onwards became concentrated on the issue of the second party Congress, which would have provided the Reform Group with an opportunity to openly criticise the past mistakes of the party and to introduce the organisational and tactical changes they deemed necessary. However, despite the fact that, according to the party constitution, the congress should have been held annually, the party leadership refused to allow this to occur.

In the summer of 1945, one year after the first Congress, the second Provincial Conference of Tehrân was formed. According to party regulations, representatives to the second Congress should have been elected from this body. However, the Central Committee refused to allow the elections to take place, arguing that the time was not favourable

33 Prior to Tito's split in 1948, it was unthinkable to waver in openly expressed loyalty to the Soviet Union.

for the holding of the second Congress. As a result of continued pressure from the Reform Group within the party, the Central Committee was then forced to concede at a meeting in Esfand 1324 (February/March 1946) that the second Congress should take place on 1st Tir (June 1946), but instead of calling a new Provincial Conference to elect delegates, decided to recall the second Provincial Conference to carry out the elections. The Reform Group, while approving of the holding of the second Congress, felt that the method of conducting elections by recalling the second Provincial Conference, was an intentional ploy to reduce their influence at the Congress. They believed that, in the light of the increasing dissatisfaction within the party, they would command a majority in the third Provincial Conference of Tehrân, and would thereby increase the number of their delegates at the second Congress.³⁴

At a meeting in Ordibehesht 1325 (April/May 1946), the Reform Group succeeded in preventing the implementation of the proposed recall of the second Provincial Conference, but the Central Committee responded merely by postponing the whole issue of the second Congress.

Within one week of the collapse of Āzerbâijân, however, it seemed likely that the Reform Group was going to be successful. At a meeting in Qolhak in north Tehrân, the Central Committee was forced to resign, and a Temporary Executive Committee was appointed, including six of the Reformers.

34 Maleki. Do Ravesh. op.cit. p.28.

Jalāl wrote;

"After the events of Āzerbāijān ... Tabari and Kiyānuri and Forutan and Maleki attained the leadership." 35

The aims of this committee were to study the criticisms of the past conduct of the party; to reveal past mistakes; to reform the party organisations; to carry out a purge of the membership; and to take steps towards convening the second Party Congress within three months, when a new Central Committee would be elected.³⁶

The Temporary Executive Committee, however, was not a successful body. It was divided amongst itself, and as a result was ineffective. Again it decided to postpone the second Congress. The "old guard" leadership, including Rādmanesh, Yazdi, Keshāvarz and Kāmbakhsh was ranged against the Reform Group, who by this time were no longer in agreement with each other. Qāsemi and Tabari were wavering,³⁷ and Maleki became virtually isolated as the only active Reformer on the Committee. Maleki became so disillusioned that he soon ceased to attend the Committee meetings.

Thus there was a complete stalemate within the higher echelons of the party. Pressure to hold the Second Party

35 The other Reform members were Qāsemi, and Nushin, Āle Ahmad, Rowshanfehrān, op.cit. Vol.2, p.183.

36 Jāmi. op.cit. pp.433-436.

37 They formed the nucleus of a group called the "Talfiqiyun" (Waverers), who later were to include Forutan, Kiyānuri and Nushin. Concerning the Waverers, Maleki has observed; "On the whole the ideas of the Talfiqiyun were mostly close to the Reform Group but their eyes were on the opportunists" Do Ravesh. op.cit. p.45.

Congress at which past mistakes were to be discussed, and at which a new Central Committee was to be elected, was balanced by the determination of the established leaders to prevent the Reform Group from obtaining positions of power from where they could implement the changes. There was an impasse.

Maleki presented himself as a moderating element in the dispute within the party. He has stated that he never intended to split from the party, and indeed that following the events of Āzerbāijān, and before the appointment of the Temporary Executive Committee, he had to prevent a split occurring, when it was suggested by Tabari. His intention was that;

"Instead of a split from the Tudeh Party, the opportunist and obedient leaders must be put aside, and a policy independent of obedience to the U.S.S.R. but completely friendly towards that country must be engaged in." 38

Although bitter at the failure of the Temporary Executive Committee, he still did not consider withdrawing altogether from the party. Instead, he attacked his colleagues on the committee, and in particular the Waverers, for displaying the same opportunism as their predecessors on the Central Committee. He selected Ehsān Tabari as the target for special invective, accusing him of sacrificing everything '... even his socialist opinions in the face of the altar and pulpit of Soviet power.'³⁹

38 Khalil Maleki, Bar Khord, op.cit. p.36.

39 Ibid. p.36.

But Maleki did not initiate a split, but withdrew from active involvement in the running of the party;

"After the events of Āzerbāijān I had tried to reform the party, but in the end I was disappointed, and stepped aside from the Executive Committee, and I imagined remaining only as a simple party member." 40

For Jalāl, doubts about the party had started at the time of Kavtaradze's mission to Tehrān in order to obtain the northern oil concession for the Soviet Union. As an official at a Tudeh Party demonstration in favour of the granting of the concession to the Soviet Union, he was appalled at the degree of open Russian support for the demonstration;

".. at the corner of Shāhābād, I saw Russian trucks full of soldiers who were overseeing and supporting our demonstration from the side of the street. I was suddenly shocked, and so ashamed that I rushed into Kucheye Sayyed Hāshem and threw away the arm-band (of an official) ..." 41

The process of disillusionment continued through the events of Āzerbāijān, the Tudeh defence of Russian troops in Iran, and the participation of the party in Qavām's government, and Jalāl increasingly worked towards the reform of the party. To that end he was in contact with both Dr. Eprim and Maleki.

Meanwhile, at a lower level within the party, the Reform Group was gaining ground. They were successful in

40 Ibid. pp.43-44.

41 Āle Ahmad, Rowshanfekrān, op.cit. Vol.2. p.175.

arranging the Third Provincial Conference in Tehrân, held between 11th and 20th Tir 1326⁴² (1st July-9th July 1947), and made a clean sweep in the elections to the Tehrân Provincial Committee, thereby ensuring an influential voice in the Second Party Congress, whenever that was to be held.

Jalâl was a member of the Tehrân Provincial Committee.⁴³ But the groundswell of success of the Reform Group was short lived. The party leadership, faced now by a real threat, increased their attacks. The Waverers amongst the leadership moved towards Yazdi, Keshâvarz and Râdmanesh, effectively isolating Maleki as the only party leader who supported the Reform Group. Some members of the Tehrân Provincial Committee, including Jalâl, suggested a split, and Maleki was persuaded to lead it. Maleki wrote;

"The idea of the split from the Tudeh Party did not in the least come from me ... this idea came from the majority of the Tehrân Provincial Committee, which in those days was the only Tudeh Party organisation in the whole of Iran which was in good shape." ⁴⁴

The group started holding secret meetings from the autumn of 1947. The first meeting was in Nâser Vosuqi's house. Finally, under the threat of imminent expulsion from the party,⁴⁵ the group decided to break away, and the notice of the Enshe'âb was written late one night.

42 Jâmi, op.cit. p.441.

43 Shams Âle Ahmad, Puyâ No.4, 19 Khordâd 1358 (1979). p.3. Other members were Hosseyn Malek (Maleki's brother), Mohandes Nâsehi, Anwar Khâme'i, Jowhari, and Mansur Shaki.

44 Maleki, Bar Khord, op.cit. p.43.

45 Âle Ahmad, Rowshanfekrân, op.cit. Vol.2. p.184.

Jalāl wrote;

".. By Maleki and Khāme'i, and in consultation with the others ... it was midnight when the proclamation was ready. I was put in charge of printing it. It took until 4 a.m. in the Tābān printing house ... and it was 5 a.m. when I handed it to the press distributors 46 and that was it." 47

The notice of the Enshe'āb was published on the 16th Dey 1326 (January 1948). The group formed the 'Jam'iyate Susiyāliste Tudehāye Irān'. The first two articles of the notice stated;

- "1. The experience of the previous year has shown that with the present leadership it is not possible to implement the fundamental reforms which the Reformers desire, based upon public opinion within the party.
2. The decision of the (Temporary) Executive Committee concerning the postponement of the Congress shows well that the Executive Committee was wary of confrontation with public opinion within the party, and wanted ... to influence the composition of the membership of the Congress."48

In this power struggle over the implementation of changes in tactics, and organisation, the established leadership was given little room for manoeuvre by the Reform Group. Their view was that;

"... leaders of the party must put themselves at the service of the Reform Group, or at least agree with

46 The word used here is the 'saqā' of the press distributors. The Saqā distributes drinking water in holy places. The implication is that the notice was distributed like water to thirsty people. ?

47 Ibid. pp.184-185.

48 Jāmi, op.cit. p.442.

the implementation of their reforming programme, and speed its execution." 49

In other words, the Reform Group demanded either the immediate implementation of the reforms they deemed necessary, including a purge of the "disreputable people" amongst the leadership, or to be given power to implement the reforms themselves. Between the first Party Congress in 1944, and January 1948, they gradually discovered that they were able to achieve neither position.

The breakaway party was equally unsuccessful.⁵⁰ Having stated that there was no ideological difference between their new organisation and the Tudeh Party, they put their heads in a political noose. On the afternoon of the 27th Dey 1326 (January 1948), the Jam'iyate Susiyâliste Tudehâye Irân was attacked by radio Moscow. Unprepared to waver in loyalty to the Soviet Union, and

49 Hezbe Tudeye Irân Sare Dorâh, op.cit. p.107.

50 Those who signed the notice of the 16th Dey 1326 were; Khalil Maleki, Anwar Khâme'i, Mohandes Esmâ'il Zanjâni, Mohandes Zâvesh, Dr. Rahim Âbedi, Feridun Tavalloli, Mohammad 'Ali Jowhari, Mohandes Nâsehi, Mohammad Sâlek, Mohammad Amin Riyâhi, Hosseyn Malek, and Jalâl Âle Ahmad. This first announcement was followed by a second, which had the additional signatures of Mohandes Navâ'i, Ahmad Ârâm, Abbâs Divshali, Hasan Gusheh, Esmâ'il Zâhed, Mojtabâ Mir Hosseyni, Mohandes Mansur Belâli, 'Abd al Rasul Parvizi, Mohandes Abul Qâsem Qandahâriyân, Mohammad Qoli Mohammadi, Jalil Moqaddam, Mohandes Mas'ud Darvish, Mir Hosseyn Sarshâr, 'Ali Shâhandeh, Mohammad Mehdi Azimi, Mohandes Mehrâbi, Mohandes Jamshid Dârâ'i, Malekeye Mohammadi, Ahmad Sâ'atchi, Mohandes Yusef Qarib, and 'Ali Asghar Khobrezâdeh. Âle Ahmad, Rowshanfekrân, op.cit. Vol.2 p.178, footnote 1.

unable to carry the party with them, they had no alternative other than to dissolve the new party,⁵¹ and to retire temporarily into political obscurity.

The Enshe'âb was a formative experience. A hurried and ill prepared move, it was precipitated by fear of expulsion from the Tudeh Party. The members of the Enshe'âb had no alternative political theory, no party organ, were disunited,⁵² and, as far as Jalâl was concerned, were politically naive;

"We never imagined that the Soviet Union with all its greatness would support people who in our opinion had degraded the party." 53

For Jalâl, the experience was illuminating. It gave him an insight into the realities of politics, a lasting mistrust of the opportunism of the Tudeh Party leaders, and was the first stage in his disillusionment with party political activity. However, it also gave him a close and lasting bond with Khalil Maleki.

Following the debacle, the members of the Enshe'âb on the whole withdrew from political activity.

51 The announcement dissolving the party was signed by Maleki, Khâme'i, Zanjâni, Zâvesh, Âbedi, Nâsehi, Jowhari, Malek, Mohammadi, Âle Ahmad, Sâlek, Navâ'i, Ârâm, Gusheh, Divshali, Zâhed, Mir Hosseyni, Parvizi, Qandarhâriyân, Qoli Mohammadi, Moqaddam, Sarshâr, Shâhandeh, Azimi, Sohrâbi, Dârâbi, Malekeye Mohammadi, Sâ'atchi, Khobrezâdeh, Dârâbzand, Esmâ'il Bigi, Tavalloli. Ibid. pp.181-182, footnote 1.

52 Ibid. Vol.2. p.180.

53 Ibid. p.185.

Maleki wrote;

"In the days following the split, when I still believed in the Soviet Union ... after the expression of Soviet disapproval towards us, I withdrew from political activity." 54

The members, however, including Jalâl, continued to meet regularly and informally. Jalâl was involved in the production of a magazine centring on the group. Entitled 'Andisheye No', it was, in addition to the informal meetings, a vehicle for the development of ✓ Maleki's political ideas. Some five issues were published from 1948. But Jalâl's main activities for the next 2½ years were writing, teaching, translating and travelling. And it was on a bus from Shirâz to Tehrân in 1948, that he met Simin Dâreshvar, the daughter of a wealthy and influential Shirâzi family. Jalâl wrote;

"It is in this period of silence that I translated some, in order to learn French. From Gide and Camus and Sartre, and also from Dostoyevsky. *Seh Târ* also belongs to this period, dedicated to Khalil Maleki. It is also in this period when I got married. When you are forced to withdraw from a large society, you build a small one in the 4 walls of a house. Fleeing from a paternal house to a party society - from that to a personal house. And my wife is Simin Dâreshvar, whom you know. *Littérateuse* and lecturer in aesthetics and the author of many works and translations." 55

From his newly strengthened personal base, Jalâl was able to move out once more into the political arena. He

54 Khalil Maleki, *Bar Khord*, op.cit. pp.39-40.

55 Âle Ahmad, *Masalan*, op.cit. p.50-51.

took a job on Dr. Baqā'i's newspaper Shāhed, at a wage of 300 tomans a month. He stated that he needed the money.⁵⁶ Dr. Mozaffar Baqā'i was from Kermān. His father, Mirzā Shahāb Kermāni was politically active in the constitutional period, and was popular and respected in Kermān. Baqā'i attended schools in Kermān and Tehrān, and then completed a doctorate in philosophy in Germany. He later taught Aesthetics at the University of Tehrān. After 1941, he was a sympathiser and a secret member of the Tudeh Party, although he left over Āzerbāijān. He was elected from Kermān to the 15th Majles, where he was a very active opposition leader. He was associated with Makki, Hā'erizādeh and Mosaddeq in opposition to the Sā'ed-Gass agreement. ? 2v.

Baqā'i was a charismatic figure. He took bast⁵⁷ in the Majles in protest against the Prime Minister Razmārā at the time of the elections to the 16th Majles, and when his newspaper Shāhed was banned following Baqā'i's successful re-election to the 16th Majles, he nonetheless went ahead and published it, personally selling it on the streets, protected by his parliamentary immunity. He attracted a lot of publicity. Politically, however, he had no ideological framework, although he was ambitious.

Jalāl persuaded Maleki to write for the newspaper. Initially he contributed unsigned articles, and subsequently became an official contributor. In this way, an alliance was formed between Maleki and Baqā'i. The attraction was

56 Āle Ahmad, Rowshanfekrān, op.cit. Vol.2. p.197.

57 Political asylum.

was mutual and pragmatic. Maleki, in the process of developing his new ideas, needed a figurehead, a charismatic political leader. Baqā'i needed an ideology with which to oppose the Tudeh Party. As a progressive, Maleki's nascent ideology of an independent socialism provided the ideological backing which Baqā'i had hitherto lacked.

Thus in April 1950, the alliance was formalised in the shape of the Toilers' Party. (Hezbe Zahmatkeshāne Mellate Irān). It was a well organised but unstable political party, in which Jalāl, as a supporter of Maleki was very active. Unfortunately, however, it was not a success, and Jalāl's experiences in the party were cause of further disillusionment.

The basis of the party was support for Mosaddeq. Thus, when Baqā'i, whether from impatience at remaining in Mosaddeq's shadow, or for reasons of genuine political disagreement, started moving away from Mosaddeq towards more conservative political forces, in particular Kāshāni, the instability of the alliance was revealed. Baqā'i eventually attacked Mosaddeq openly, and suggested to Maleki that the Toilers Party should break with Mosaddeq. Maleki refused. Baqā'i, recently released from hospital, went to the party headquarters and demanded an extraordinary meeting of party activists. The meeting was held in September 1952. Baqā'i attacked Maleki's supporters, accusing them of agitating against him while he had been in hospital, and insulted Maleki's brother, Hosseyn Malek. Maleki lost his temper, whereupon Baqā'i banged his walking

why did
not succeed?

stick on the table, only to see it grabbed by Maleki, who also banged it on the table. Baqà'i then walked out, and the party was openly divided.

Meanwhile, the party club, or headquarters, were in the hands of Maleki's supporters. Three days later, however, thugs hired by Baqà'i, and led by a man named 'Eshqi, raided the club. Jalâl wrote;

"One afternoon a group was working on the usual party affairs, when suddenly there was an attack. A group of chàqueshàn poured into the party, and threw the hazrat (i.e. Maleki's group) out of the door by the scruff of their necks." 58

Such was the subtlety of political debate.

Immediately following this disaster, Maleki's section of the Toilers' Party met at Maleki's house to discuss the future. It was a stormy meeting which was divided between those who wished to retire, and those who wished to carry on. The younger members, including Jalâl, were in favour of continuing their political activity, and their views carried the day. The party formed at the meeting kept the name Toilers' Party, but added the suffix Third Force (Niruye Sevvom). The party subsequently became known as the Third Force. The main objective of the party at this stage was to give unqualified support to Mosaddeq. Both the party and its press, (the daily newspaper Niruye Sevvom, edited by Hosseyn Malek and the monthly

58 Àle Ahmad, Rowshanfekràn, op.cit. Vol.2. pp.199-200.

magazine 'Elm o Zendegi, edited by Amir Pishdād) became the main channel for the now fully fledged political theory of Maleki. Jalāl was in charge of the party propaganda, and was a member of the 12 man central committee.

Within a year, however, the new party was in disarray. The military coup of 19th August 1953 broke the leadership and demoralised the party membership. Maleki went into hiding for three weeks, until the daily radio broadcast a list of those expected to give themselves up which included his name. He was sent to the Falak al Aflāk gaol, with members of the Tudeh Party, where he remained for a number of years. The Third Force went underground, and a group led by Khonji attempted to have Maleki expelled from the party. He was not expelled, but Khonji refused to lead the party, preferring to leave, and the party was left leaderless. Jalāl was asked to lead the party, but also refused, as he was by now completely disillusioned with political party activity. Jalāl's disillusionment is represented by his 'towbeh nāmeḥ'.⁵⁹ Three months after the coup, he published a notice in the Tehrān leading daily newspaper to the effect that;

"I hereby declare that I Jalāl Āle Ahmad from Farvardin 1332 (March/April 1953) resigned from the Third Force, and in addition I absolutely abandoned politics. And that is my last word." 60

59 Literally 'letter of repentance'.

60 Etelā'āt, Panjshambēh 14th Abān 1332. p.11.

Jalāl was subsequently embarrassed about this notice. It is not strictly true that he absolutely abandoned politics then or at any other time, and he was ashamed of having appeared to bow to government pressure. Nonetheless, his sense of disillusionment with politics was very real. He felt a personal distaste for the realities of politics. He had seen his old friend Nāser Vosuqi expelled from the Tudeh Party in 1947 as a result of personal differences;⁶¹ he had been through the traumatic experience of the Enshe'āb; he had seen the Toilers Party end in a fight; and by the time the Third Force was formed, although he was still active, he was losing interest. He has written of an occasion when the party leaders were invited to visit Mosaddeq, following the attack on his house on the 28th February 1953, when members of the Third Force, and Jalāl in particular played a leading part in protecting the house. When the bus carrying the leaders arrived at Mosaddeq's house in Khiyābāne Kākh, Jalāl, who was with Hāj Sayyed Javādi;

".. turned to the Seyyed and said 'Do you feel like a beer instead of these formalities?' He did. And we went." 62

The final straw, however, was when the Central Committee of the Third Force attempted to expel Vosuqi. Jalāl threatened to resign publicly if they did so. Vosuqi was not expelled, but Jalāl felt strongly that he did not have the

61 Āle Ahmad, *Yek Chāh Va Do Chāleh*, op.cit. pp.33-34.

62 Ibid. p.35.

taste for internal party political bickering. He later wrote;

"I even changed my house. Of course you know that in those days my wife was in America, and I had plenty of freedom, and in order to be near the party I had come and rented a house beside the Third Force. When this occurred (i.e. the Vosuqi incident) I abandoned that house and came here to Shemirân near the house I was building, and rented two rooms, and spent all of my time building." 63

Indeed Jalâl has claimed that his isolation at this time was so complete that he was not aware of the fact that the coup had occurred until two days afterwards.⁶⁴ This is difficult to believe, and would appear to reflect his subsequent embarrassment at his towbeh nâneh. By emphasising the fact that he had 'absolutely' abandoned politics 4-5 months before the coup, Jalâl hoped to avoid the impression that he had written the notice as a result of government pressure. Following the coup, Jalâl was arrested with his brother Shams and a group of friends, and he spent a few hours in the Dâdsetâni gaol, until his release was secured by virtue of his wife's family influence.⁶⁵

In 1953, Jalâl was 30 years old. He had broken away from his strongly religious family background, he had moved into intellectual literary and political circles, he had suffered a process of increasing disillusionment with the personalities and the politics of the day; he was a recently married schoolteacher, and a competent short story writer.

63 Āle Ahmad, Rowshanfekrân, op.cit. Vol.2. p.227.

64 Ibid. pp.227-228.

65 Shams Āle Ahmad, Interview in Puyâ, No.4, 19 Khordâd 1358 (1979). p.4.

Although he had published four collections of short stories, (Did o Bâzdid, 1945; Az Ranji Keh Mibarim, 1947; Seh Târ, 1948; and Zane Ziyâdi, 1952), he was going nowhere in particular.

The conservative supported coup of August 1953, imposed an authoritarian regime on Iran. There were wholesale arrests of political leaders, including Dr. Mosaddeq, Dr. Fâtemi, Dr. Shâyeğân and Dr. Sanjâbi of the National Front. The Tudeh Party was broken, and the remaining leaders smuggled themselves out to Eastern Europe. In 1955, General Zâhedi was replaced by Hosseyn 'Alâ. He was in turn rapidly replaced by Manuchehr Eqbâl, who was unusually sychophantic towards the Shâh. By the late 1950's, the Shâh had started the process of rapid economic development backed by western (and at that time in particular American) capital, and was beginning to exercise a degree of personal control which had hitherto eluded him.

1961, however, brought a revival of political activity in Iran, which coincided with the election of Kennedy to the United States presidency, a financial crisis in Iran, and consequently the Shâh's need for American political and financial support. The National Front was reconstituted, and 'Ali Amini, who had both a degree of popular support within Iran and American backing, became Prime Minister. There was a degree of liberalisation, and a far reaching and potentially radical Land Reform bill was drafted. However, Amini resigned over the size of the military budget. The Shâh took over Arsanjâni's land

C.I.A.
Backed Coup

reform, and converted it into the White Revolution, broke the back of the landlord dominated Majles, and created a new personal basis of support in the peasantry. By the autumn of 1963, the state had thus reasserted its authoritarian control. A new group of politicians and technocrats emerged who were to remain for the next decade or more, and renewed suppression of dissent was accompanied by an economic boom in which the government exercised control over financial and industrial resources. Economic development had one objective; to modernise and westernise Iran as quickly as possible, and at virtually any cost.

For left wing intellectuals, the political atmosphere of these years, with the exception of 1961-1963, was depressing. Following the coup, there was little overt political activity, and the formation of the officially blessed Mardom and Melliyun parties in 1958 did nothing to ease the sense of repression. The Third Force, underground since 1953, emerged in 1960 to form the Socialist League of the Popular Movement of Iran, again led by Maleki, but it was not a very effective influence. Following the clamp down of 1963, it was again pushed underground, and Maleki's group could do nothing but watch increasing numbers of intellectuals give up their principles and climb on the bandwagon of economic and technocratic expansion.

Thus for those involved in left wing political activity, the overall characteristics of the years 1953-1969, were those of retrenchment and frustration. The increasing efficacy of the security organisation SAVAK deepened the sense of repression, as opponents of the regime were, by

the middle 1960's not only limited to their public means of expression, but also frequently under personal threat.

In the years following the coup, the direction of Jalâl's activities changed. It has already been observed that his own inclination was taking him away from involvement in party politics. The coup pushed him further down an independent and eventually isolated road.

He did, however, maintain a loose connection with his former Third Force colleagues. Although not active in the political organisation itself, nor in the Socialist League of the Popular Movement of Iran, he remained personally in touch with his friends, and was an occasional contributor to their journal 'Elm o Zendegi'.⁶⁶

When he was not teaching in various schools in Tehrân, he spent much of his time travelling. While Dr. Gholâm 'Ali Sayyâr's comment on Jalâl, that

"This man is a villager who has come to town"⁶⁷

is an exaggeration, it is nonetheless correct that Jalâl identified strongly with the villages of Iran and rural life, and his experiences of the countryside was considerable. His childhood connections with the village of

66 There were 42 issues of 'Elm o Zendegi, brought out between Dey 1330 (December/January 1951/1952) and Esfand 1340 (February/March 1962). The magazine was periodically banned, but would reappear under a slightly different title. In all four titles were used; 'Elm o Zendegi, Nabarde Zendegi, Havâdârâne Nabarde Zendegi, and Ketâbe Enteshârâte 'Elm o Zendegi.

67 Âle Ahmad, Arzyâbiye Shetâbzadeh, Amir Kabir, 1357 (1978). 2nd.ed. p.75.

Owrâzân in Tâleqân were strong, and he also had family connections in Boluke Zahrâ, where his brother-in-law was a mulla. Jalâl frequently visited his sister and her family there. In 1954 and 1958 he published monographs on each of these places respectively.⁶⁸ He wrote a third monograph on the island of Khârg, published in 1960,⁶⁹ after which he was appointed supervisor of a series of monographs published by the Institute of Social Studies and Research of the University of Tehrân.

During the 1950's, he also travelled round the Kavir, (the central desert of Iran),⁷⁰ and frequently visited Khuzestân.⁷¹ On one occasion he walked from Behbehân to Kâzerun, a journey of some 15 days.⁷² According to his brother Shams, Jalâl had visited over 2000 Iranian villages in his lifetime.⁷³ However, until 1962, he had only travelled abroad twice; first to Iraq, when he stayed in Najaf, and then to Europe with Simin in 1957.⁷⁴

However, with the advent of a more liberal political atmosphere in 1961, Jalâl again became active in an organisation. He attempted to start an independent magazine.

68 Āle Ahmad, Owrâzân, Dânesht, 1333 (1954), and Tâtnesh-înâyê Boluke Zahrâ, Dânesht 1337 (1958).

69 Āle Ahmad, Jazireye Khârg, Dorre Yatime Khalije Fârs. Tehrân 1339 (1960).

70 Āle Ahmad, Safar Beh Shahre Badgirhâ Arzyâbi, op.cit. pp.154-169, and Gozari Beh Hâshieye Kavir, in Kârnâmeye Seh Sâleh, op.cit. pp.230-268.

71 Āle Ahmad, Gozaresh Az Khuzestân, Kârnâmeye Seh Sâleh, op.cit. pp.66-94.

72 Āle Ahmad, Goftoguye Darâz, Arzyâbi, op.cit. p.67.

73 Shams Āle Ahmad, Puyâ, No.4, op.cit. p.2.

74 Āle Ahmad, Kârnâmeye Seh Sâleh, op.cit. p.44.

Funded by the Keyhân publishing group, the intention was to produce a literary and political magazine which did not put forward the view of an established political faction. Jalâl was not optimistic about the project;

"For a long time I stayed clear of it all, until I knew everything about it, and had consulted with many people. Then I went with a very orderly written contract - that the publisher has no say in the arrangement of the articles, and the editor has the final word on the articles and the writer's wages. Three months preparation, and then six months work, and during this period, 50-60 people gathered together, and we were able to issue 2 numbers, each of which was suspended. The third number was at the press, and the writers had taken their wages, when the magazine was permanently suspended. From the start I knew that it would not (be allowed) to find a place for itself." 75

Thus the magazine, called Keyhân Mâh, was another channel for political activity. It was also an opportunity for Jalâl to gather about him the younger generation of writers. The magazine was run by Jalâl, Simin, Parviz Dâriyush and Shams Âle Ahmad. Contributors to the two published issues included Islâm Kâzemieh, Sirus Zekâ, Dâriyush Âshuri, Bahrâm Beyzâ'i, Mohsen Qâsemi, Bahman Mohasses, Bahman Forsi, Gholâm Hosseyn Sâ'edi, and Sirus Tâhbâz. The magazine claimed no party political affiliation, and stated that all writers were responsible for their own views. It was a brave attempt at idealism, and was doomed to failure.

Periodically, Jalâl was also involved in the publication of other magazines. He worked on Naqsh Va Negâr with

75 Âle Ahmad, Yek Châh Va Do Châleh, op.cit. pp.36-37.

Simin, on the first 3 years of Jahâne Now with Rezâ Barâheni, and also published articles in Mehregân, Irâne Mâ, Majaleye Fasl, and Vosuqi's magazine Andisheh Va Honar. However, with the closure of Keyhân Mâh, Jalâl was again reduced to silence, and again partly found a remedy in travel. He went to Europe in 1962,⁷⁶ then to Israel in the summer of 1963,⁷⁷ on a pilgrimage to Mecca in the spring of 1964⁷⁸ to Moscow in August 1964, at the invitation of the Society of Iranian and Soviet Cultural relations to attend the 7th international Congress of Sociologists,⁷⁹ and to the United States in the summer of 1965 where he spent two months, and attended an international Seminar of Literature and Politics at Harvard University.⁸⁰

Thus in the increasingly suffocating political climate following 1953, there were fewer and fewer channels for Jalâl to express his political opinions. He increasingly felt the pressure of government disapproval, and when Parviz Nâtel Khânleri was Minister of Education between July 1962 and March 1964, Jalâl was banned from teaching, and worked in the government office concerned with producing school textbooks. He saw other writers and activists using their skills to further their personal ambitions, and his criticisms of their conduct, and consistent refusal

76 Àle Ahmad, Masalan, op.cit. p.53, and Àle Ahmad, Şangi Bar Guri, Ravâq, 1981.

77 Àle Ahmad, Velâyate Esrâ'il, in Andisheh Va Honar, 5th period, No.4. pp.384ff.

78 Àle Ahmad, Khasi Dar Miqât, Nil. 1346 (1966).

79 Àle Ahmad, Arzyâbi, op.cit. pp.170-190.

80 Àle Ahmad, Kârnameye Seh Sâleh, op.cit. pp.95-130.

to do the same thing enhanced his isolation.

His response to the suffocating political climate was to write - on anything and everything. To be reduced to silence by the situation was no answer for a writer and activist. Thus he concentrated his political activity through his writings. In the sixteen years between the coup and his death, he published 14 books. Three more have been published since his death,⁸¹ and there remains a vast collection of unpublished material in the study of his house in Tajrish, north Tehrân. The bulk of his work after 1953 was political tracts, articles on a wide range of subjects, and novels.

The main theme in the work of Āle Ahmad from 1953 was the development of a comprehensive critique of contemporary Iranian society, and the presentation of the critique in a fictionalised form. The books *Seh Maqāleye Digar* (1958), *Gharb Zadegi* (1962) and *Dar Khedmat Va Khiyānate Rowshanfekrân* (1978, but written in between 1963 and 1969) form the core of the critique. In the works, he deals with the effects of modernisation and westernisation on Iranian society, the roles of the West and the Pahlavi government in the exploitation of Iranian resources, the role of the contemporary intellectual and religious leader in Pahlavi Iran, and suggests a contemporary role for Shii Islam in the development of modern Iran. He argues for a strengthened sense of Iranian cultural identity as a counter to the inevitability of modernisation.

81 *Yek Chāh Va Do Chāleh*, *Dar Khedmat Va Khiyānate Rowshanfekrân*, and *Sangi Bar Guri*.

His main fiction of these years presents elements of this critique, mixed with his own personal and political experiences. Writing, for Āle Ahmad, was the main form of political activity after 1953, and thus the novels *Nun Va'l Qalam*, (1961), *Modire Madraseh* (1958), and *Nefrine Zamin* (1967) are all part of his political statement.

However, the publication of Jalāl's works served only to increase his isolation from his contemporaries. They were not impressed with his critique, least of all with his views on religion and the concept of individual martyrdom with its implicit rejection of political party activity. Such ideas were an anathema to a generation brought up on Marxist theory. Jalāl had never been a political theorist, and his attempts in that direction were treated with a certain amount of derision by his old Tudeh Party and Third Force colleagues. Thus Jalāl found himself out on an intellectual limb, while he, in turn viewed his own generation as barren; as a generation which had given up resisting. In his isolation, Jalāl turned to the younger generation. The attraction was mutual. Jalāl has written in detail concerning the fact that he and Simin remained childless.⁸² It was, perhaps, their greatest regret. Consequently Jalāl turned to the young he saw around him. In turn, the younger generation received him well. His uncompromising character was attractive; he had time and he had patience for them; and, particularly by the middle 1960's, his clarion call for resistance was

82 Āle Ahmad, *Sangi Bar Guri*, op.cit.

what they wanted to hear.

Thus, Jalāl became a figurehead in the 1960's; a symbol of resistance. His house was frequently visited by young writers, artists and activists - Forugh Farrokhzād, Samad Behrangi, Gholam Hosseyn Sà'edi, Dr. 'Ali Shari'ati, Behruz Dehqāni, and many others. Or Jalāl would sit in the Cafe Firuz or the Cafe Ferdowsi in Tehrān, surrounded by his 'disciples', telling them what not to do and what to do, and above all advocating activity, involvement and resistance. By 1963, he was famous, viewed as a popular leader by the younger generation of students and intellectuals.

Jalāl died in his country cottage in Asalam, shortly after sunset on Tuesday 8th September 1969 (17th Shahrivar 1348). He was 46 years old.⁸³ The body was taken to Pā Chenār mosque, and Jalāl was then buried in the Firuzābād mosque in Reyy, close to his old friend Khalil Maleki.

83 It has been suggested that Jalāl was killed by SÀVÀK. See Shams Àle Ahmad, Puyā, No.4, op.cit. pp.4-5. The evidence is unconvincing. A doctor called by Simin diagnosed a heart attack. See Pā Chenār Mesle Hamisheh Nabud, Majaleye Rowshanfekr, 27 Shahrivar 1348 (September 1968).

CHAPTER 2

GHARB ZADEGI

The book Gharb Zadegi is central to the works of Āle Ahmad. It forms the core of his critique of Iranian society developed in the years following the disillusionment brought about by his political experiences and the coup of 1953. Much of his writings between 1953 and the publication of the first edition in Mehr 1341 (September/October 1962) are concerned with developing his concept of gharb zadegi; most of his writings after 1962 are devoted to revising, perfecting and further developing his concept, and expounding it in fictionalised form.

The term "gharb zadegi" is like a chameleon. It changes its meaning to suit the colour of the political opinions of the person who uses it. Coined originally by Ahmad Fardid¹ to fit a specific philosophical concept, borrowed and popularised by Āle Ahmad to describe a quite different but equally specific aspect of contemporary Iranian society, the term has since passed into common usage, and has been applied indiscriminately amongst the internal divisions of the Iranian revolution;

".. in the last two or three months, the freedom of women has become gharb zadegi; the demonstrations

1 A philosopher, who taught at the University of Tehrān. A contemporary of Jalāl Āle Ahmad.

of the Cherikhâye Fedâ'iye Khalq² have become gharb zadegi; freedom of the press has become gharb zadegi; every kind of criticism of Master of the Scrolls Qotzâdeh³ has become gharb zadegi; every kind of request concerning the identity of the members of the Revolutionary Council has become gharb zadegi; every kind of discussion concerning secret trials has become gharb zadegi; every kind of workers freedom; cooperation of students and workers has become gharb zadegi; every kind of healthy clash of opinions has become gharb zadegi." ⁴

Even dismissing the meanings forced upon it by political expediency, it is a difficult term to translate. It is better to avoid the literal translation "West-struckness", as on the one hand it is not English and is ugly and unwieldy, while on the other hand it does not imply the full range of connotations found in the Persian equivalent.⁵ As the term has already shown an unusual ability to travel far from its roots, it would appear to be unnecessary to encourage it further by inadequate translation. "Gharb zadegi" will not be translated, but will be explained in the sense used by Jalâl Âle Ahmad.

-
- 2 Marxist guerilla group, arising originally out of the Tudeh Party, led by Behzân Jazani. It started operating in 1970, and became known following the defeat of armed uprising at Siyâhkal in Gilân. It continued as an urban guerilla group until the revolution, when it emerged overground as a political party.
 - 3 Sâdeq Qotbzâdeh was appointed Minister for Radio and Television by Khomeyni to the Bâzargân cabinet in March 1979. Disliked by many intellectuals, he was given the nickname Master of the Scrolls (amir tumâr) as a result of a letter he organised ostensibly declaring popular support for himself in the face of criticism by intellectuals.
 - 4 R. Barâheni; Dar Enqelâbe Irân Cheh Shodeh Ast Va Cheh Khwâhad Shod. Zamân. Tehrân 1358. (1979) p.221.
 - 5 The term as used by Âle Ahmad, has the connotations of an illness; an infatuation; a painful physical occurrence; a mania or a fad; a natural accident; subservience; imitation; a degree of insanity; and of being lost, caused by and in relation to the west.

There has been much controversy surrounding the book. The description of the problems facing contemporary Iran and the search for a remedy to the situation have been described as filling the air of the 1960's with heart stirring perfume, and bringing out a spirit which formed the background to the artistic, intellectual and political flowering of the 1960's and 1970's.⁶ While elsewhere, the author has been castigated as living 300 years behind the times, and the success of Gharb Zadegi dismissively put down to the fact that the "popular" ideas found in the book fell on the simple-hearted who were thirsty for its polemic.⁷ Nonetheless, the influence of the book has been considerable, especially on the younger generation of politically active students, and while arguably the book has gained more fame or infamy than it deserves, it has undeniably been more influential than the author expected;

"... then it still lives ... while I thought that it wouldn't live (more than) two months. Then it would die - that is be forgotten. But it wasn't so, since it is still talked about. And what could be better?"⁸

The confusion found within the book has contributed

-
- 6 Esmā'il Nuri 'Ala; Ma'nāye "Ejtemā'i-Siyāsi" Neveshtane Ketābe Gharb Zadegi. Nāme'ye Kānune Nevisandegāne Irān. No.1. Bahār 1358 (1979), p.250.
- 7 Bāqer Mo'meni; Ru Dar Ru. Enteshārāte Shabāhang. 2536 (1977), pp.82-84.
- 8 Jalāl Āle Ahmad; in Goftoguye Darāz Bā Dāneshjuyāne Tabriz, Kārnāme'ye Seh Sāleh. Ketābe Zamān. n.d. p.164. Mir Ahmadi suggests the date of publication of this collection of 10 articles was 1963. (M.Mir Ahmadi; Analyse der Werke Gelāl Al e Ahman unter Berucksichtigung Socialer Aspekte. Friern Universitat Berlin. 1977. p.32). She is wrong. The discussion with Tabrizi students did not take place until 1967, see Kārnāme'ye Seh Sāleh op.cit. p.159. 1968 or 1969 are more likely years of publication.

to the controversy surrounding it. With three notable exceptions (the role of religion, the description of the state of contemporary Iranian society, and the language in which it is written) it is a comprehensively negative book, enabling the reader to abstract almost anything he wishes which is against the system.

The book itself has had a chequered career. Starting in an embryonic form as a report given by Jalāl to the Showrāye Hadafe Farhange Irān⁹ at two of the meetings on 8 Āzar 1340 and 27th Dey 1340 (November 1961 and January 1962), it was not included in the proceedings of the council,¹⁰ due to its controversial nature. Typed copies of Jalāl's report were, however, produced, and handed out amongst his friends for their comments and criticisms. At this stage Jalāl received encouragement from Dr. Mahmud Human, and with him translated "Across the Line" by Ernst Junger.¹¹ The first five chapters of Gharb Zadegi then appeared in the first issue of Ketābe Māhe Keyhān¹² at

9 Council for the Aims of Iranian Education.

10 Published in Bahman 1340 (January/February 1962).

11 Dr. Mahmud Human, then teaching at the University of Tehrān, introduced Jalāl to Junger's book. Human read out the translation and Jalāl wrote it down. Junger was born in Heidelberg in 1895, and brought up in Hanover. He joined the Foreign Legion at the age of 18. He fought first in Africa, and during the First World War, in Europe. He then lived in Naples and Leipzig. He was an opponent of Fascism. Across the Line concerns nihilism. Jalāl was encouraged in his attempts to publish Gharb Zadegi by finding a similar train of thought in Junger. See Ernst Junger; 'Obur Az Khat, tr. Dr. Mahmud Human and Jalāl Āle Ahmad, Enteshārāte Ābān. 2nd ed. Esfand 1349 (1971). pp.10-16.

12 Ketābe Māhe Keyhān No.1, p.p.17-44.

the beginning of 1341 (spring 1962), and contributed to the suppression of that magazine, again due to the controversial nature of the content.¹³ The first full edition of the work was published by Jalâl himself in 1000 copies in Mehr 1341 (September/October 1962). Towards the end of 1342 (early spring 1964), he revised the work in readiness for a much larger reprint, but again fell foul of the censor, and the book was again banned. Showing remarkable persistence, he again rewrote it in Farvardin 1343 (March/April 1964) and sent it abroad for publication, but without success.

Thus, in book form, there are two existing editions; that published in Mehr 1341 in 1000 copies, and the second edition, rewritten in Farvardin 1343, but not published until, probably, 1978.¹⁴ Between these two editions, the only extra copies available were photocopies of the first edition produced secretly in Tehrân and California, and passed from hand to hand.

The differences between the first and the second editions of *Gharb Zadegi* do not substantially affect the work. In his revisions, Jalâl was clearly concerned to remove some of the more glaring errors of definition and historical fact, and to modify some of the vagueness and generalisation of the first edition. While it is not necessary

13 Dr. Gholâm Hosseyn Sa'edi has informed me that part of the reason for the suppression of this magazine was due to the publication of his short story *Pupake Siyâh* in the second issue, *Shahrivar* 1341 (August/September 1962) pp.151-153.

14 *Gharb Zadegi*; 2nd revised edition. Ravâq. n.d. The date of registration with the National Library is given as 4,10,2536. (late December 1977).

to exhaustively examine the differences between the two editions, it is perhaps useful to indicate the nature of the revisions.

One of the more significant differences between the two editions lies in his definition of terms. In the first edition, the "west" is described as Europe and North America,¹⁵ whereas in the second edition, the definition is widened to include all of Europe and the Soviet Union, all of North America, and to extend even to South Africa.¹⁶ The definition of "east" is also widened in the second edition from Asia and Africa¹⁷ to include Asia, Africa and South America.¹⁸ The second edition places greater emphasis on the role of religion, both as a basis of rivalry between the Christian west and the Islamic east,¹⁹ and as an active participator in the

15 1st. ed. p.5.

16 2nd. ed. op.cit. p.21.

17 1st. ed. p.6.

18 2nd. ed. pp.22-23. It was suggested to me in two interviews in Tehrân that the reason for the exclusion of the Soviet Union in the first edition was because Jalâl was afraid of the repercussions if he criticised the Soviet Union. It seems hardly likely that this was so. He faced far more danger from the regime in Iran as a result of his criticisms than from the Soviet Union and its agents. It seems unlikely, after all, that he excluded South Africa from fear. It is more probable that the exclusion of the Soviet Union from the first edition was due to the fact that he felt the issue to be too controversial, and should be avoided, or that he still had a reluctance to bracket the USSR in the same group as the arch colonial Europe and USA, or simply that his view was so narrow that he forgot about it, as was surely the case with South Africa and South America. In any case the issue is cleared up in the 2nd. ed., when he specifically states that USSR is no longer leader of the world revolution and in terms of political and economic exploitation, is indistinguishable from the USA. 2nd. ed. op.cit. p.26. It seems that the increased economic links between the USSR and the Shâh's regime contributed to this change in Jalâl's view, as did the Soviet confirmation of the referendum of the 6th Bahman. Ibid. p.26.

19 Ibid. pp.32-34; 47; 59.

struggle against oppressive rule and cultural exploitation.²⁰ The attacks on the government of Iran are both stronger and more direct in the second edition,²¹ as are the attacks on western advisers and orientalist.²² Overall, there is more detail, additional footnotes, and increased use of statistics in an attempt to tie up some of the loose ends of the first edition. Substantially, however, there is no difference between the two editions. The second is merely a more refined version of the first. The second edition will be used here.

The development of the ideas contained in Gharb Zadegi coincide with a new stage of Jalāl's life. Following the disasters of his involvement in party politics between 1944 and 1953, and his renunciation of involvement in political parties in November 1953,²³ and accompanying the increasing sense of oppression following the coup of 1953, he was concerned to find a new personal foundation on which to face the world. Ahmad Fardid helped him over this difficult transformation and facilitated his re-emergence with a new and individual view of

20 Ibid. p.82.

21 e.g. Ibid. p.109.

22 Ibid. p.p.124; 128-129.

23 see chapter 1 p.28 above.

society.²⁴ Although, like many other young writers of the time, he was familiar with the works of Sartre, Camus and other existentialist French writers, (encouraged by the influence of Sâdeq Hedâyat), his acquaintance with Fardid broadened the base of his understanding of concepts such as "responsibility", "engagement", and "fundamental existence". Through this acquaintance, he turned from involvement in organised party politics to concentrating on the individual in society, on individual responsibility, and so found an escape from the depression and hopelessness he felt following his experiences of 1944-1953.²⁵ This change in Jalâl's view of the world is reflected in a conversation with Dr. N. Vosuqi, where Jalâl states;

".. I no longer want to change the world. Politicians change the world to a sufficient extent. I have business with individual men, not with groups of people. There are (political) parties and the radio and so on enough for groups. I see that in that area I can no longer do anything. But in this changing individual people ... I think that a long future can be seen." 26

-
- 24 There has been much discussion of Fardid's influence on Jalâl. Their relationship commencing in 1954 in meetings at the teachers organisation headquarters, the Mehregân Club, off Lâleh Zâr, Tehrân, has, I think, been given more significance than it deserves, due chiefly to the disagreement between the two men arising out of the publication of Gharb Zadegi. Briefly, the argument concerned the fact that Fardid felt that Jalâl had misrepresented Fardid's interpretation of gharb zadegi. Jalâl however never claimed to present Fardid's view. See 2nd ed. op.cit. p.16. The difference between the two concepts of gharb zadegi is nonetheless interesting. Fardid's view is given below pp.76-78.
- 25 D. Âshuri; Mardi Bar Khenge Tiz Pâye Qalam. Negin No.148. 13th year. Shahriyar 2536 (1977), pp.18-22.
- 26 Goftogu Bâ Jalâl Âle Ahmad. Andisheh Va Honar, 5th period. No.4. p.395.

The need for change was increasingly widely felt during the 1960's and 1970's in Iran. The policies of modernisation, or westernisation, although started in the late 19th century and expanded by Rezâ Shâh, had, by the 1960's developed an inexorable momentum, which accompanied by an increasingly repressive political climate, rolled mercilessly over the sensibilities and sensitivities of ordinary people.

The policies of westernisation, as represented by the social, political and economic developments of 20th century Iran, have been frequently observed elsewhere.²⁷ The facts are well known. The pattern of centralisation and westernisation was followed by Rezâ Shâh. He reformed and expanded the education system along western lines, introducing a western syllabus, and greatly increasing the number of schools. The administration was centralised; the judiciary reformed; the basis of a bureaucracy was laid; men were ordered to wear western style hats and women were forbidden to wear the châdor. Economic development, although piecemeal, was in the direction of a western state capitalist economy, with the establishment of state monopolies in various goods in the 1930's, state control of transport and communications, of mining, the

27 For example; L.P. Elwell Sutton, *Modern Iran*. Routledge and Sons 1941. P. Avery, *Modern Iran*, Benn. 1965. A. Banani, *Modernisation of Iran, 1921-1941*, Stanford University Press, 1977. J. Bharier, *Economic Development in Iran 1900-1970*, O.U.P. 1971. A.R. Arasteh, *Education and Social Awakening in Iran, 1850-1968*, Brill. 1969. J. Amuzegar and M.A. Fekrat, *Iran, Economic Development under Dualistic Conditions*. University of Chicago 1971. *The Economist*, *Another Persia, a Survey of Iran*, October 1970. *The Economist*, *Quiet thee now and rest, a Survey of Iran*, 28 August 1976.

foundation of the Bank Melli, and state involvement in industry.

This direction was continued by Mohammad Rezā Shāh from the mid 1950's. With the formation of the Plan Organisation,²⁸ centralised planning became an even more important factor, with the planned development of an economic infrastructure, of transport and communications, of public utilities and services agriculture, industries, mines, and regional programmes. Following the disturbances of 1961-63, Land Reform and the White Revolution, planning, state control and development were given a large boost by rapidly increasing oil revenues, while the oil revenue increases of 1973 took the planners from the realms of optimism to the realms of fantasy. This rapid development was accompanied by extended state control guaranteed by state revenues flowing from the sale of oil, and exercised through the formation of SĀVĀK, a huge expansion of the armed forces, the growth of a large bureaucracy, and the lack of political freedom. At the same time, there was a considerable population explosion, and a significant increase in the urban population, high urban unemployment, and the creation of a westernised middle class.

The details of these more recent developments are

28 The Plan Organisation, although formed in 1949, was not effective until the mid 1950's. The first 7 year plan (1949-1956) failed as a result of the lack of funds arising from the Anglo-Iranian oil dispute.

not needed here.²⁹ It is the nature of the developments which are significant. The Shâh's overambitious plans for the westernisation of Iran from the 1960's, has been described as "pseudo-modernism" whereby "... modern technology ... is seen as omnipotent, and capable of performing miracles which would solve any and all socio-economic problems once purchased and installed".³⁰ Westernisation, progress, and technology, became the panacea: speed became the criterion. The environment in which the technology was placed, the social and economic background against which it had to operate, were ignored. Westernisation was imposed upon Iran, Iranian institutions and the Iranian people. Existing institutions, economic and social relations and cultural traditions were held to be backward, and the standard of measure of success was quantitatively measured progress. The results, the first signs of which were recorded by Àle Ahmad in Gharb Zadegi, were dire.

Gharb Zadegi describes what it was like to be on the receiving end of this kind of development, and its accompanying political system. It is the view of an individual; Jalâl's personal view of the world and his analysis of the ills of contemporary Iranian society. It is the basis from where he moved on to a future concentrating on "changing individual people".

29 They may be found, however, in R. Graham, *Iran, the Illusion of Power*. Croom Helm. London 1978, and H. Katuzian, *Political Economy of Modern Iran, 1926-1979*. N.Y. University Press. 1981.

30 Ibid. p.103.

However, as an analysis, Gharb Zadegi is weak. Jalâl was too impatient and intellectually lightweight to study deeply into unfamiliar areas. He was an emotional man of action, who felt ill at ease with theoretical or philosophical concepts, and was more concerned with the immediate practical effects of a philosophy or a political theory than with the philosophy or theory itself.

Jalâl's historical, philosophical and theoretical weaknesses are reflected in the book Gharb Zadegi. The ideas contained in the second edition are not presented in a coherent fashion. It is not an orderly book. The thirteen chapters are broadly devoted to defining the term "gharb zadegi", describing how the situation has occurred in Iran, describing the effect of gharb zadegi on contemporary Iran, recommending changes to alleviate the situation, and, at the end, to making some loose observations on western society. Readers are likely to find themselves at any time taken backwards and forwards through history, across the world and back, or warily negotiating roundabouts of circular arguments. Āshuri has neatly summarised the problem;

"The difficulty of writing a criticism of this book is that one doesn't know where to start, since almost all the subjects are everywhere, and despite the fact that the book is divided into chapters, one cannot find any order in it". 31

Nonetheless, the book, if unsatisfactory in historical, philosophical and theoretical terms, indicates how Jalâl com-

31 D. Āshuri; Hushyâriye Târikhi. Barrasiye Ketâb. Esfand 1345 (1967). p.23.



bined an intense emotional conservatism with an equally strong sense of injustice, and overlaid his strength of feeling with an untrained historical, political and philosophical analysis, the result of which is remarkable sometimes for its emotional perception, rarely for its intellectual depth.

To abstract a cohesive political outlook from the book *Gharb Zadegi* is then a dangerous affair, as there is a risk of imputing to the author a more sophisticated political approach than he actually possessed. Nevertheless, with due caution, it is possible to reduce the basic ideas contained in the book to the following five points.

First, that with the introduction of machines³² into Iran and their accompanying values, Iranian society and Iranian cultural values have been disturbed, with detrimental effects on the people, the quality of life, social relations and cultural values. Iran is sick;

"I mean gharb zadegi like being struck down with cholera. And if that doesn't please the palate, I say like (suffering from) heatstroke or frostbite. But no - at least its something like aphid struck. Have you seen how it attacks wheat? From the inside. The healthy skin is in place, but it is only skin - like the same skin which remains on a tree from a butterfly. In any case, it's all about a sickness - an accident which has come out, and which has grown in an environment prepared for sickness". 33

This disease, brought about by the introduction of alien

32 The Persian word used here is 'māshin'. It is not clear what Āle Ahmad means by this word, but he appears to mean any kind of technology.

33 Ibid. p.34.

western values into Iran, is defined as;

"A compendium of factors which have appeared in the life, culture, civilisation and thought of the people of part of the world, with no tradition by way of foundation, with no continuity in history, and with no consistency in development, but only by way of the gift of machines". 34

The result is that;

"Now under this standard, we resemble a people strangers unto ourselves - in clothes, housing, food, customs, and press. And more dangerous than all - in our culture. We are brought up westernised, and look to the west for the solution of all our problems". 35

The effect on society of the existence of two incompatible sets of cultural values is wide ranging, from;

"That villager who has fled to the town and does not return again to the village because the visiting barber of his village does not stock Brilliantine, and there's no cinema in the village, and he can't buy sandwiches". 36

to a national press which concentrates more on the latest events in Hollywood and Broadway than to events in Iran;³⁷ from the disruptive effects of Land Reform, the mechanisation of agriculture and the influence of transistor radios³⁸ to the flood of urban migration, resulting in the towns resembling overgrown junkyards,³⁹ overcrowded and with inadequate

34 Ibid. p.34.

35 Ibid. p.78.

36 Ibid. p.79.

37 Ibid. p.88.

38 Ibid. pp.92-93.

39 Ibid. p.94.

facilities;⁴⁰ from a chaotic and inadequate education system⁴¹ to the emergence of rootless, characterless, materialist individuals,⁴² Iranian society suffers under opposing tensions, produced by the existence of two incompatible sets of cultural values.

Secondly, that western capitalists, backed by western governments, control machines, and through this control exercise political and economic dominance over Iran (and other underdeveloped countries). That during;

"This last 50-60 years ... things have so worked out that our political and economic and cultural fate lies directly in the hands of the companies, and the western governments which support them".⁴³

Western domination is maintained by the western monopoly of the construction of machines. The economic forces of the world are such that Iran is forced to export raw materials to the west, and import machines manufactured in the west in exchange.⁴⁴ In this way, western industry plunders Iran, in effect governs her, and controls her destiny.⁴⁵

Thirdly, that the Iranian government acts in collusion with the western capitalists and governments to maintain this dominance, benefitting in a material sense from the arrangement. Therefore, the Iranian government does not act in the interests of the Iranian people.

The way in which the Iranian government colludes with

40 Ibid. p.163.

41 Ibid. chapter 11.

42 Ibid. chapter 9.

43 Ibid. p.77.

44 Ibid. p.27.

45 Ibid. p.78.

the west in maintaining this dominance is highlighted by the oil question, where Āle Ahmad suggests that the western, and in particular British and American support for the Pahlavi Shāhs was linked to the oil companies need for a stable, centralised state providing the political security necessary for the successful exploitation of the oil resources.⁴⁶ The government benefits in a material sense from the arrangement by acting as a middleman in the exchange of raw materials for finished goods occurring between Iran and the west. The main beneficiaries are first the companies themselves, and then the government of Iran;

"It is in this way that we have ministers and parliamentary representatives and government".⁴⁷

The government, then, does not act in the interests of the people of Iran. It maintains its internal control through the oversized army,⁴⁸ SĀVĀK,⁴⁹ by preventing freedom of speech and expression, and the publication of any opinion contrary to that of the government.⁵⁰ This government, relying upon;

"western military aid, on guns and tanks presented by America, on westernised press, on their papers and correspondents, on their political statesman .." ⁵¹

and with its;

46 Ibid. pp.84-87.

47 Ibid. p.131.

48 Ibid. p.168.

49 Ibid. p.173.

50 Ibid. p.171.

51 Ibid. p.108.

"organisations and schools, with its barracks and offices, with its prisons and its radio propaganda" 52

oppresses the Iranian people, from whom;

".. it demands taxes, takes soldiers ... by force, encourages bribery everywhere ... and turns its guns and cannons continually on the people". 53

Yet the people see that the government;

".. with all its pomp and circumstance, its organisations and budget and foreign assistance, guns and tanks, is not able to solve the smallest social problem ..." 54

Fourthly, that Iran is forced by circumstances to accept machines. Political and economic necessity require the acceptance of machines;

"The debate does not concern the denial of machines, or the rejection of them ... never. The take over of the world by machines and technology is an historical inevitability". 55

Fifthly, that the problem facing the people of Iran, therefore, is to find a way of adopting and accepting machines and technology which ensures on the one hand that Iranian cultural values and social relations are not weakened, and on the other hand that machines are used for the benefit of the Iranian people.

52 Ibid. p.105.

53 Ibid. p.105.

54 Ibid. p.p.105-106.

55 Ibid. p.27.

The chief danger facing Iran from the existence of two incompatible sets of values is that "western" values will destroy Iranian values.⁵⁶ The introduction of machines must be based firmly within Iranian society and culture, demanding the cooperation of the religious authorities,⁵⁷ intellectuals,⁵⁸ the reorganisation of the economic system,⁵⁹ education,⁶⁰ reform of the media, army agriculture, and the introduction of democracy.⁶¹

The key to ensuring that machines are used for the benefit of the Iranian people lies in acquiring control of machines;

"The soul of this devil 'machine' (must be) bottled ... (and) brought out at our disposal ... The Iranian people must not be at the service of machines - trapped by them, because machines are a means, not an end. The end is the removal of poverty, and the placing of material and spiritual wellbeing within the reach of all the people". 62

The two participants in the spread of the disease of gharb zadegi are the west (USSR, Europe, North America and South Africa, perpetrators of the disease) and the east (Asia, Africa, South America, victims of the disease).⁶³

Āle Ahmad elaborates the definitions of the west, by stating that it includes;

56 Ibid. p.28.

57 Ibid. p.82.

58 Ibid. p.111.

59 Ibid. p.119.

60 Ibid. p.119 and chapter 11.

61 Ibid. pp.163-174.

62 Ibid. pp.118-119.

63 Ibid. pp.34-35. Although Jalāl has a world view of the problem of gharb zadegi his main concern is in Iran.

".. the advanced countries - or developed countries - or industrial countries - or all the countries which are able, with the assistance of machines, to turn raw materials into finished goods and as articles present them on the market". 64

By "east" he means;

".. the backward countries - or developing countries - or non industrial countries - or the group of countries which are consumers of the goods manufactured by the west". 65

By way of clarification, he adds;

".. in my opinion, east and west are no longer geographical concepts ... for me, west and east neither have a political meaning, nor a geographical (meaning), but are two economic concepts. West means the full countries and east means the hungry countries". 66

To ease the digestion of these definitions, he continues;

"Then I define the countries of the first group by these general interlaced characteristics: high wages, low death rate, low birth rate, orderly social services, sufficient food (at least 3,000 calories a day), income per head of more than 3,000 tomans per year, complexion of democracy with the heritage of the French Revolution ... and the second group of countries with these characteristic: ... low wages, high death rate, higher birth rate, no social services, or (only) the imitation, poor food (at most 1,000 calories per day), income of less than 500 tomans per year, no sign of democracy with the heritage of the

64 Ibid. p.21.

65 Ibid. p.22.

66 Ibid. p.22-23.

forefront of colonialism". 67

He then suggested that Marx's view of the struggle between the classes is outdated and too simple for the contemporary world⁶⁸ and suggests that today the concept of a world divided between the "haves" and the "have nots" is more appropriate;

"Our world is a world of confrontation between the poor and the rich ... one the constructors (of machines) and the other the consumers". 69

Machines are central to his concept of gharb zadegi;

"Then gharb zadegi is a characteristic of a period of our history when we still haven't brought machines into our service, and we do not know the secret of their organisation and construction. Gharb zadegi is a characteristic of a period of our history whereby we are not familiar with the basics of machines, that is the new science of technology. Gharb zadegi is a characteristic of a period of our history whereby due to the nature of the market and economics and the exchange of oil we are obliged to buy and consume machines". 70

The framework abstracted from the book, and the definitions and their elaborations given above, are set in an historical background, whereby Āle Ahmad attempts to show

67 Ibid. pp.23-24. He repeats these criteria in a summary of his gharb zadegi thesis given at Harvard University, summer 1965, and goes on to describe the nature of the economic relationship as resembling that of a master - servant, or a "classic colonial" relationship, although in the new form of neo colonialism. Kārnamaye Seh Saleh, op.cit. p.117.

68 Gharb Zadegi op.cit. p.26.

69 Ibid. p.27.

70 Ibid. p.35.

that a root cause of this disease of gharb zadegi is the fact that Iran has always looked to the west.⁷¹ His historical analysis is built round the simple framework that the west emerged from the middle ages via the industrial revolution at the same time as Iran entered an introverted state of decline.⁷² Within this coincidence lies the fact that Iran has always looked to the west, a tradition arising from the flight of Iranians from Mother India,⁷³ tribal pressure from the north east driving Iranians towards the west,⁷⁴ the tendency of Iranians to keep a weather eye out for the rain clouds coming from the west,⁷⁵ and, it would seem, pure habit in the sense of a traditional rivalry existing between the two area.⁷⁶ Whereas until 300 years previously, the rivalry had been one of equals,⁷⁷ within the last 300 years the relationship has changed, and Iran has allowed an equality to give way to servitude, sorrow and helplessness;⁷⁸

"Finally one has emerged as the sweeper of the square. And the other is the owner of the arena".⁷⁹

The Iranian decline was assisted by the opening of the sea trade routes as an alternative to the overland routes through Iran;⁸⁰ that a disunited and squabbling Islamic entity was

71 Ibid. p.39.
 72 Ibid. p.57.
 73 Ibid. pp.40-41.
 74 Ibid. p.41ff.
 75 Ibid. p.49.
 76 Ibid. pp.51-53.
 77 Ibid. p.53.
 78 Ibid. p.53.
 79 Ibid. p.54.
 80 Ibid. pp.60-61.

faced by an aggressive Christian challenge;⁸¹ that the religious leadership responded to the challenge by retiring into a cocoon;⁸² that the response of Iranian intellectuals was inadequate and consisted merely in indiscriminately adopting western criteria in order to meet the challenge laid down by the west.⁸³ The division between the religious authorities and the intellectuals, he argues, reached the point where mashru'eh (Islamic government) and mashruteh (constitutional government) became opposing concepts of those against the adoption of western methods and criteria, and those in favour of it; of religion and irreligion.⁸⁴

The central remedy to the state of gharb zadegi found in the book is control of machines through their construction;

".. as long as we are only consumers, as long as we do not construct machines, we are gharb zadeh".⁸⁵

Thus the fundamental solution is to "bottle the soul of this devil machine" and to use them for the benefit of the people.⁸⁶ In order to facilitate the development of indigenous industrialisation, Āle Ahmad recommends comprehensive reforms;

"In this way we must first construct an economy ... that is an independent economy, and then training, classes and a system: then furnaces to melt metal and stamp the will of the people on it, and then expert workers who will turn it into various shapes: and then schools which will teach these specialisations in

81 Ibid. p.59-60.

82 Ibid. p.78.

83 Ibid. pp.79-80.

84 Ibid. pp.81-82.

85 Ibid. p.29.

86 Ibid. pp.118-119 and see p.57 above.

practice, and then factories which will convert this metal into machines and other goods: and then a market of the towns and villages so that machines and other goods are within reach of the people". 87

He states that the basic requirement of all reforms is that the tribes should be settled in tribal units. Not, however, by force, as hitherto has been attempted, but by providing suitable land for cultivation; the means of cultivation; involvement in the construction of houses; the foundation of health and cultural centres and repair shops for every newly founded village;

"In any case, as long as the tribal tent poles are not changed into the foundations of village houses, and tribal men and women are not familiar with cultivation, and as long as tribal children do not sit to study under arches of schools, every step of reform in this country is either a demagogic lie or a childish pretension". 88

He argues that villages will not prosper until the threat of conscription has been lifted; until the temptations of the towns have been removed; until fear of the destruction wrought by migrating tribes has been removed; until roads have been built to the villages, electricity reaches them, repair centres for agricultural machinery are established, and classes in mechanics are held in the schools.⁸⁹

Acknowledging that 90% of the population is religious, or at least lives according to religious criteria,⁹⁰ he suggests that religion has a crucial role to play in insti-

87 Ibid. p.119.

88 Ibid. p.161.

89 Ibid. p.163.

90 Ibid. p.103.

tuting reform. He proposes that the religious authorities fight back against the government radio stations using their own radio stations based in Qom or Mashhad;

".. if the religious authorities knew that with the belief in the 'absence of the need to obey temporal authority' what a precious jewel was held in the hearts of the people like a seed for every uprising in the face of the government of the oppressors and corrupt people - and if they could show the fundamental essence of this temporal authority by means of the media (newspapers, radio, television, films etc.) and be specific in their criticisms, and if they could open a route to international religious organisations and give a movement to affairs, they would never be so bound to small things that its result is this pure ignorance, and remaining to one side of life". 91

and that intellectuals should present alternatives to the current system in a way which includes religion.

The media, he states, should be controlled by elected councils of writers and intellectuals;⁹² the cartels and trusts, especially those which control culture should be "nationalised or socialised";⁹³ the army should be reduced in size, and barracks turned into centres of specialised learning for trades and skills;⁹⁴ students should be sent abroad to study only in Japan and India, rather than in Europe and north America,⁹⁵ and the country should benefit from the services of committed teachers and leaders.⁹⁶ Finally, the political system should be democratic, and not merely have the appearance of being so.⁹⁷

91 Ibid. p.82.

92 Ibid. p.165.

93 Ibid. p.166.

94 Ibid. pp.169-170.

95 Ibid. pp.192-193.

96 Ibid. p.216.

97 Ibid. pp.172-173.

Jalāl Āle Ahmad's political view represented by the five points abstracted above from the book *Gharb Zadegi* is broadly well within the Marxist-Leninist analysis of the development of capitalism in its Imperialist stage. The view that the capitalist countries, through the development of monopolies and cartels, control and divide up the raw materials and markets of the world, and are assisted in so doing by the existence of puppet regimes in the underdeveloped countries, is not new. Jalāl, through his involvement in the Tudeh Party, the Zahmatkeshān Party and the Niruye Sevvom, was in a milieu where this political analysis was commonplace. There are many examples of linking imperialist countries with the regime of Iran in Tudeh Party literature, written at the time when Jalāl was involved in the party. In 1946, a fairly standard article in *Mardom* stated;

"The influence of Imperialism in Iran is the greatest danger which threatens our country. Imperialism, for ensuring the success and the spread of its influence has always benefitted from reactionary forces in Iran ... accordingly it is against the freedom and independence of the nation and country of Iran". 98

The Reform Group within the Tudeh Party, of which Jalāl was a member, wrote;

".. the establishment (in Iran) rules for the benefit of the upper classes, which are reactionary forces, supporting reactionary parties and Imperialist countries.."99

98 Rāđmanesh; Siyāsate Mā. *Mardom Ābān* 1325 (1946). p.4.

99 Hezbe Tudeye Irān Sare Dorāh. *Tehrān Farvardin* 1326 (1947). p.51.

and Jalāl has admitted the lingering influence of the Tudeh Party on his view of society;

"I have brought a view of society from there, and will carry it to my grave". 100

Jalāl's longer lasting association with Khalil Maleki's group of socialists centering first on the Zahmatkeshān Party and subsequently on the Niruye Sevvom and, following the coup of 1953, the magazine 'Elm o Zendegi'¹⁰¹ ensured that the Marxist Leninist analysis of Imperialism became part of his absorbed ideology. If the Tudeh Party bestowed a view of society on Jalāl, the Niruye Sevvom and his friends involved in 'Elm o Zendegi provided the political detail;

".. a number of the ruling classes of backward countries, instead of defending the interests of their people in the face of the foreign ruling class, act as their hired labour, and become the brokers of oppression, and plunder their nation for the benefit of the foreign ruling class". 102

'Ali Asghar Hāj Sayyed Javādi,¹⁰³ Jalāl's friend and colleague, writing in 1953 made the same divisions of the world used by Jalāl in Gharb Zadegi. He points out that the advanced

100 Goftogu Bā Jalāl Āle Ahmad. Andisheh Va Honar op.cit. p.397.

101 Published between Dey 1330 (Dec/Jan 1951/52) and Esfand 1340 (Feb/March 1962), in a total of 42 issues. The occasionally spasmodic publication of this journal was due to its periodic suppression by the authorities, upon which it would reappear under another but similar name. In all this journal was called 'Elm o Zendegi, Nabarde Zendegi, Nashriyeye Havādārāne Nabarde Zendegi, and Ketābe Avval and Dovvome Enteshārāte 'Elm o Zendegi. See Chap.1.p.33

102 Niruye Moharakeye Tārikh. 2nd publication of Hezbe Zahmatkeshāne Mellate Irān Bahman 1330. (1952) p.9.

103 Journalist, essayist and prominent opposition intellectual.

industrial countries present in terms of the underdeveloped countries, an economic, cultural and social unity. While distinguishing between the internal arrangements of western capitalist states and the Soviet Union, he observes that they act in the same way as far as the rest of the world is concerned, and describes these countries as Imperialist states, which "by means of their economic organisation, manage the world, control raw materials and markets ..." ¹⁰⁴ He too notes the links between the puppet regimes and the Imperialist advanced industrial states;

"In backward countries, all the conditions of the economic and political life of the people must be in accordance with the general policy of the exporting country; all institutions must place their activities in the service of foreign capital". ¹⁰⁵

Jalâl specifically admits the influence of "A world between fear and hope" by Tibor Mende, translated into Persian and published by Khalil Maleki in 1960, in the formation of his view of the division of the world into two camps. ¹⁰⁶ Maleki, commenting on Tibor Mende, accepts his division of the world into industrialised and non industrialised states, and summarises the view of the world as;

"America and Russia are in one camp, and opposite them are poor Asia and Africa - slaves of backward regimes,

104 'Ali Asghar Hâj Sayyed Javâdi; Do Surate Târikhiye Imperiyâlisme 'Asre Mâ. 'Elm o Zendegi. Year 2 No.1. Noruz 1332. (1953) p.5.

105 Ibid. p.9.

106 Gharb Zadegi. op.cit. p.24, footnote 1. Tibor Mende was a Hungarian. The book was first published in 1953.

and inheritors of the feudal regimes of the Middle Ages". 107

Thus the political view held by Jalâl and contained in Gharb Zadegi is in no sense original, and while its roots stretch back to Hobson and Lenin¹⁰⁸ it is Jalâl's general experience in the Tudeh Party, and specifically his friends in the Niruye Sevvom and on 'Elm o Zendegi who provided the environment from which Jalâl absorbed his ideology.

However, Jalâl was in no sense an ideologue. His was an emotional grasp of ideology, providing a background against which he could set his observations of contemporary Iranian society. His political view is not presented clearly or coherently in Gharb Zadegi, but is scattered throughout the book. His approach is not theoretical. It is unfortunate, however, that he attempted to present some of his analysis in Gharb Zadegi in a theoretical dressing. He was not successful, and the result, when not inadequate, is incomprehensible, contributing significantly to the confusing nature of the book.

As we have seen, Àle Ahmad adopts the division of the world into industrialised and non industrialised states which has its roots in the Marxist-Leninist analysis of

107 K. Maleki (writing under the pseudonym 'student of the social sciences'). Az Enherâf Râh Nist. Havâdârâne Nabarde Zendegi 8. Ordibesht 1339 (1960) p.1.

108 J.A. Hobson. Imperialism. 1902. V.I. Lenin. Imperialism, the highest stage of capitalism. 1916.

imperialism, adapted and elaborated specifically in ideas current amongst the Niruye Sevvom. However, he is not consistent in this essentially economic division. In his historical analysis, the terms "east" and "west" appear to specifically represent a geographical concept, when he refers to rivalry between the Christian "west" and the Islamic "east". The terms describing these pre-industrialised geographical areas obviously bear no relation to the economic division between "industrialised" and "non industrialised" countries. His list of criteria by which a member of the "west" or "east" may be distinguished include sociological and political criteria, including, as part of the "western" criteria the "complexion of democracy". This ignores the political system of the Soviet Union, which elsewhere he specifically includes as part of the west. He states, as part of the "eastern" criteria, "no sign of democracy", this ignores the political system of India. The division of the world between the "haves" and the "have nots" is so grossly oversimplistic as to be meaningless, and leaves as many questions unanswered as it attempts to solve. He does not consider the differences in the standard of living amongst the industrialised countries themselves, nor the wide range found amongst the non industrialised countries. And neither does he consider the existence of the "haves" and "have nots" within each country, whether industrialised or not. Given the fact that he states that the term "east" and "west" are no longer in his view geographical terms at all,¹⁰⁹ it is difficult to see why he employs the terms.

109 Gharb Zadegi. op.cit. pp.22-23.

Accepting the fact that his intention in using the terms east and west was an economic division of the world, his economic concept remains inadequate. If in economic terms he sets the industrialised countries against the non industrial countries, stating that the basis of their relationship is the extraction of raw materials from the non industrialised countries and their conversion by the industrialised countries into finished goods, followed by their export back to the non industrialised countries, a process which leads to the political, economic and cultural domination of the latter by the former, this idea too closely resembles a vast conspiracy theory on the part of the "west", and ignores the fact that the industrialised countries are not only in competition with each other for access to raw materials and markets amongst the non industrialised countries, but also have their own raw materials, and extensive trade relations amongst themselves. The presentation of the "west" as "producers" and the "east" as "consumers" is, then a gross simplification, and ignores the fact that the greatest consumer of technology, consumer durables, or indeed any kind of machine at all, are the industrialised countries themselves.

His one innovation in terms of Marxist-Leninist theory of Imperialism is retrogressive. According to Lenin, it is the export of surplus capital which distinguishes the highest stage of capitalism from the earlier stage characterised by the export of commodities. Yet Àle Ahmad's economic view of imperialism is inextricably bound up with the export of commodities, - in the shape of "machines". Nowhere does he

define "machines". It is uncertain whether he means heavy industrial plant, or consumer durables such as televisions, cars, fridges, or the kind of technology necessary for the mechanisation of agriculture. It would seem that the only conclusion which can be drawn is that, for Āle Ahmad, provided a piece of mechanical equipment is produced in an industrialised country and imported into a non industrialised country, then it is the "devil" machine.

In short, Āle Ahmad uses the terms "west" and "east", "rich" and "poor", "consumer" and "producer", and "machine", as blanket terms to justify his analysis of the situation in Iran as he saw it at the time. The concepts are general, simplistic, inaccurate, and above all, confused.

In terms of theoretical analysis and definition of terms, in Gharb Zadegi, Āle Ahmad has displayed his own ignorance. He shows that his theoretical grasp is weak, that his political and economic understanding is no more than basic, and his ignorance of the west is such that it leads him to resort to conspiracy theories. He attacks the west as if;

".. the black workers of Detroit in America, and the hungry of the Harlem area of New York, and more than 20 million half starved Americans, and millions of workers, peasants, blacks and American Indians of Europe and America, and all the anti imperialist and anti capitalist intellectuals, and all the European and American students and young people opposed to the Vietnam war, all dissidents, and Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, Johnson and Nixon, all joined in the plundering of our civilisation, culture and raw materials". 110

110 R. Barāheni. Jalāl Āle Ahmad. Shojā'at Va Sharāfate Qalam. Bāmdād. 19th Shahrivar 1358 (1979).

The weakness of his theoretical grasp is matched by the inadequacies of his historical analysis. The inaccuracies of the historical analysis contained in *Gharb Zadegi* have already been observed;¹¹¹ the lack of documentation; the curiousness of the idea that Iran has always looked to the west, and its justification in terms of a flight from Mother India; the confrontation of "west" and "east" in terms of a struggle between Christianity and Islam. Āle Ahmad's lack of knowledge of the Crusader period and Mongol and Safavid history has been pointed out, as has the selectivity of presenting the "east" as an area without urban centres, the "west" as a united religious entity, colonialism or neocolonialism as originating in a religious struggle, the oversimplicity of the division between 'mashru'eh' and 'mashruteh' in the Constitutional period in Iran, and the responsibility of the Constitution for allowing machines into Iran. In short, the substantial historical section of *Gharb Zadegi* (some 50 pages out of a total of 227 pages in the second edition) is not an historical analysis, but is an historical justification. The section is orientated towards attempting to argue a single point - that Iran has always looked to the west. This classic Āle Ahmad generalisation

111 D. Ahuri; *Hushyāriye Tārikhi*. op.cit.
 R. Barāheni; *Dar Enqelābe Irān*. op.cit.
 A. Āghdāshlu; *Negāhiye Do Bāreh Beh Tārikh*. Andisheh Va Honar. op.cit. pp.449-463.
 N. Vosuqi; *Jahānbini Va Payāmash*. Ibid. pp.431-448.
 M. Mirahmadi; *Analyse der Werke Galāl Āle Ahmad*. op.cit. pp.128-134.
 Dr. J. Irāniyān, *Vāqe'iyate Ejtemā'i Va Jahāne Dāstān*. Amir Kabir. Tehrān 1358 (1979) pp.148-163.
 Dr. F. Ādamiyat, *Āshoftegi Dar Fekre Tārikhi*, Tehrān, n.d., but probably 1981.

is merely a search for historical justification for the point he makes about contemporary Iran - that Iran is dominated by the west and western values, via the medium of machines. It is a projection back into history, with academic pretensions, of Āle Ahmad's contemporary observation, and as such merely adds to the confusing nature of the book. As Vosuqi has pointed out, the historical section of the book has, in fact, no basis in history, but consists in personal notes and opinions.¹¹²

As the immediate theoretical background to Gharb Zadegi is found in the Niruye Sevvom and 'Elm o Zendegi, so too are the remedies to the situation of gharb zadegi presented by Āle Ahmad. He repeats in general terms ideas specifically proposed by Maleki's group of socialists, and thus his remedies recommend broad areas of reform with which few on the Left in Iran at the time would have disagreed. There is no independent philosophical or theoretical base to the remedies, and they are characterised by simply an overriding concern to preserve and independence of Iran and to preserve Iranian cultural values, matched by an equal concern to remove social, economic and political injustice.

Khalil Maleki was advocating a political line independent of the west and the Soviet Union as early as 1947¹¹³

112 N. Vosuqi. op.cit. p.445. Jalāl himself was aware of the inadequacies of the historical section of the book; "... in Gharb Zadegi I do not consider myself an historian ... as in painting I am not an expert, as in history I am not an expert ... in any case I am a man capable of error ..." Goftogu Bā Jalāl. op.cit. p.396.

113 The question of Iranian independence lay behind the split in the Tudeh Party in 1948. See chapter 1, p.10 .

and emphasised this view in one of the earliest publications of the Zahmatkeshân Party;

"The Third Force in any case by way of solving social problems, chooses a national and social way of life which puts up resistance to the two ways of life - American and Russian, which they try and impose upon us". 114

In an article in 'Elm o Zendegi suggesting the foundation of a "League of Iranian Socialists", the editorial committee¹¹⁵ calls for "clean, honest realistic intellectuals" to attempt to form the government, and to work within the existing constitutional framework towards establishing a true Parliamentary form of government, and to work towards socialism in accordance with the nature of Iranian society and inherited national customs and religion. The article advocates policies independent of the two blocks of the world, and support for other underdeveloped countries in the face of imperialism of the west and the Soviet Union, calls for the redistribution of land and the introduction of mechanised agriculture, the nationalisation of industry and the preservation of local crafts and industries, and emphasises the need for parliamentary, constitutional, democratic government.¹¹⁶ Àle Ahmad specifically admits the influence of several articles on land reform by Hosseyn Malek,

114 Niruye Sevvom Chist? Komisiyune Enteshârâte Sâzmâne Javânâne Hezbe Zahmatkeshâne Mellate Irân. 1951. p.9.

115 Although the article was signed by the editorial committee, it was almost certainly written by Maleki.

116 Nabarde Zendegi Year I. No.10. Ordibehesht 1335 (1956) pp.3-13.

the brother of Khalil Maleki, on his own view of the need for land reform,¹¹⁷ and again it is Maleki, through his translation of Tibor Mende, who emphasises the need for an independent economic system, and through fundamental land reform, suggests a road towards progress. Quoting from Tibor Mende, Maleki praises;

"those countries which have tried to raise the importance of their internal markets, and to benefit from the extraction of their raw materials for internal capital construction (not consumption) and particularly for industrialisation". 118

and observes;

"One fundamental problem from which all other problems derive is the regime of landlord and peasant ... without changing the regime of ownership of the middle ages i.e. landlord and peasant, to a new or modern regime, a road out of this stagnant cul de sac cannot be found". 119

Thus Āle Ahmad's remedies are derived specifically from Maleki's group. His call for control over the construction of machines, the establishment of an economic system independent of the Imperialist countries, the need for land reform and the need for basic facilities in rural areas, the nationalisation of cartels and trusts, and the need for committed intellectuals, teachers and leaders, and a democratic system of government are all found in the literature of Maleki's group. Āle Ahmad's solutions are derived from this milieu, but lack the political ideal of the original.

117 Gharb Zadegi. op.cit. pp.162-163. The articles by Malek are in Havâdârâne 'Elm o Zendegi, No's.4, Khordâd 1338; 5 Dey 1338; 6, Bahman 1338; 10, Ābân 1339.

118 K. Maleki. Az Enherâf Râh Nist. op.cit. p.3.

119 Ibid. p.5.

Thus in terms of theoretical and philosophical content, Gharb Zadegi is weak and derivative. The political view behind the book is a simplistic adaptation of the Marxist Leninist analysis of imperialism and the definition of terms adds confusion to that analysis. The historical justification is inaccurate, and the suggested remedies are a repetition in general terms of the views developed specifically by Maleki's group of socialists, but lack their commitment to a political ideal. The book represents an indiscriminate attack on the west, and thus indicates Jalâl's unfamiliarity with the west. Barâheni has observed that;

"Jalâl's first hand knowledge of the political culture of the west, not only in relation to socialism, but also with the whole of western culture, both philosophy and literature, was very insignificant. Jalâl neither was informed about the past and fundamental roots of western culture, nor of its greatest manifestations ... Jalâl did not know Rousseau, Hegel, Marx and Engels ... Jalâl favoured philosophical novelists, of the kind such as Andre Gide, Malraux, Albert Camus, Jean Paul Sartre, but his understanding of the roots of their thought was of a very insignificant level". 120

This ignorance and indiscriminate attacking of the west leads Jalâl to fall into the trap of being the mirror image of a person suffering from gharb zadegi. If gharb zadegi is manifested by an indiscriminate and superficial attraction to a western way of life, western values and western goods, then Jalâl, by indiscriminately attacking the western way of life, western values and the superficiality of western

120 R. Barâheni, Jalâl Âle Ahmad, Shojâ'at Va Sharâfate Qalam. op.cit..

materialism is within the same mould of gharb zadegi but presenting a mirror image. Attraction is reversed into rejection. But the measure is the same - the west. Jalāl fails to break out of the mould, and is himself suffering from Gharb Zadegi. ✓

Ahmad Fardid complained that on philosophical grounds Jalāl was suffering from gharb zadegi himself. It has already been pointed out that Jalāl borrowed the phrase "gharb zadegi" from Fardid and used it for his own purposes,¹²¹ and the change in meaning that the phrase underwent in the process of adaptation has in turn added to the confusion surrounding the book. Fardid, it would seem, by the term "gharb zadegi", intended a strict philosophical concept derived from the work of Martin Heidegger.¹²²

The fundamental concern of Heidegger's work *Sein und Zeit*, 1927, is what is meant by Being. He distinguishes between the world of objects, and "Dasein" (Being There). Dasein is possible ways of being. Dasein may be authentic - (being aware of Dasein through Care, Dread, and living in the light of the sovereign possibility of Death) or unauthentic, (being unaware of Dasein and dominated by the world of

121 See p. 40 above.

122 Fardid is known as an erudite and obscurantist philosopher. Fardid's concept also has an apocalyptic dimension, the "west" (gharb) having connotations of darkness and evil. He has been reluctant to publish, and his lectures in Tehrān are famous for the difficulty with which they can be understood. My interpretation of Fardid's view of gharb zadegi is, therefore, in the absence of a more reliable source, dependent upon hearsay and guesswork, assisted by Āshuri's summary in Negin. op.cit. p.21.

material objects). One of the characteristics of Dasein, termed "Verfallen" by Heidegger, is to lose itself in the "I" and the world that belongs to it, and to allow the "I" to take it over, driving on to a restless activity, and bringing Dasein into a state of self estrangement. This self estrangement is unauthenticity, - "a potential mode of Being of itself". 123

In the course of history, the original human situation has become obscured by everyday existence, and man has come to live an unauthentic personal existence, concerned with building up knowledge of the intellegible world. Man's continual achievement of knowledge of the material world increasingly obscures Being;

"Knowledge is in its very validity a form of untruth because it conceals the ignorance which it does not abolish ... Heidegger (takes a philosophical stand against the modern multiplicity of knowledge) ... within the tradition of western philosophy by raising again the question of Being in a way that is intended to break the present preoccupation with technical problems and pursuits and the present pretensions of science, and to renew western Civilisation ... by restoring contact with its source and informing principle ..." 124

Fardid appears to have taken this concept of self estrangement of Dasein and the resulting concentration on the material world at the expense of awareness of Dasein, and extended it to include men finding the absolute in "self". He then extends it further to by arguing that this "self" may be in relation to the individual, or his people

123 M. Heidegger. Existence and Being. Introduced by W. Brock. Vision 1968, p.57.

124 H.J. Blackham. Six Existentialist Thinkers. Routledge, Kegan Paul 1978 p.104.

or nation (the new nationalism) or with all of humanity (internationalism). Fardid suggests that looking to culture to determine national characteristics is a sign of the new age, and the prevalent "self centredness", whether of an individual or national nature, is an exclusive product of western thought. He then argues that the world prevalence of western civilisation has exported this style of thought throughout the world, and consequently, any stance taken against the west in the contemporary world is shaped in the mould of ideologies which, despite being apparently anti west, have their roots in the west. Thus, according to Fardid's definition of "gharb zadegi", Àle Ahmad's thesis cannot avoid being gharb zadeh itself; - it answers the west according to the west's own criteria - the absolute "self", and the search for an identity in terms of a national culture.

The search for a national culture is the key to the book ✓
Gharb Zadegi. The essence of the book is a search for a popular or national identity in the face of international values, or as an alternative to pure surrender in the face of colonialism and western values. The driving force behind the work is a sense of affront at the destruction of Iranian cultural values, and a wish to combine an inevitable modernisation and necessary reform of Iranian society with the preservation of those values; an awareness of progress fighting an emotional conservatism.

Jalâl's preoccupation with a search for a cultural identity in Gharb Zadegi is presaged in his earlier nonfictional

writings. His cultural orientation, as distinct from a theoretical or philosophical approach to the problems of contemporary Iran, can be seen to develop through Owrâzân, published in 1954,¹²⁵ Tâtneshinhâye Boluke Zahra¹²⁶ and Jazireye Khârg,¹²⁷ and in the collection Seh Maqâleye Digar.¹²⁸

His first major nonfictional work was the book Owrâzân,¹²⁹ a semi anthropological, semi sociological description of the village where his ancestors lived, situated

125 Dânešh. Ordibehesht 1332 (1954).

126 Dânešh. Mehr 1337 (1958).

127 Jazireye Khârg, Dorre Yatime Khaliye Fars. Dânešh? 1339 (1960).

128 The three articles were also published in 'Elm o Zendegi. Var Shegastegiye Matbu'ât, in Havâdârâne 'Elm o Zendegi, No.3., Farvardin 1338 (March/April 1959) pp.1-18. Chand Nokteh Dar Bâreye Khat o Zabâne Farsi, in Havâdârâne 'Elm o Zendegi, No.7. Farvardin 1339, (March/April 1960); Beh Labshuye Ketâbhâye Darsi, in Havâdârâne 'Elm o Zendegi No.10. Abân 1339 (Oct/Nov 1960) pp.28-42. In the third edition, (Ravâq Tehrân n.d.), the date of the first publication of the book as a whole is given as 1337 (1958), and the date Abân 1336 (Oct/Nov 1957) is inscribed on the title page and given as the date of registration with the National Library. Mir Ahmadi also suggests 1957 as the date of publication of the first edition. There is some confusion here. On the one hand it would be unusual for the three articles to be published first in book form and subsequently to appear in a journal, while on the other hand the dates of writing given at the end of each article in the 3rd edition are, respectively, Esfand 1337, (Feb/March 1959), Farvardin 1339 (March/April 1960), and Dey 1339 (Dec/Jan 1960/61). As the dates given by Jalâl in the 3rd edition correspond roughly with the dates of publication in 'Elm o Zendegi, (and it would seem more likely to publish the collection in book form after publication separately in magazines) I would suggest that a more likely date for publication of the first edition was 1962/3, and that the information given by Ravâq is wrong.

129 He had previously published the collection of articles. Haft Maqâleh (Seven Articles) in various magazines up to 1953, all but two of which were translations. He also published a few minor articles in Mardome Mâhâneh, and the newspaper Shâhed and Niruye Sevvom.

on the edge of Mâzandârân to the north west of Tehrân, in an area called Tâleqân. As a study of a specific area of rural Iran, it was an innovation at the time. Yet it is, as he admits himself, a rather crude work,¹³⁰ taken from notes made during his frequent visits there in his youth.¹³¹ Concerning his intentions in publishing the study, he writes in the preface;

"Although our villages form the core of our social organisation as well as the foundation of our civilisation, they are taken into account neither in our present policies nor in our educational schemes. No village attracts the curiosity of our scholars, or the attention of our government authorities, or any sympathy on the part of our politicians. The few orientalist and dialectologists who have visited some of our villages, have published nothing concerning the way of life and customs of the people in those villages".¹³²

Thus in Owrâzân, it is with the way of life, customs, folklore and language of a rural area representing in his view the basis of Iranian civilisation that he is concerned. There is no analysis of the village in relation to a wider society, nor treatment of the village as a political or economic unit. It is a record of aspects of daily life in the village of his ancestors; a nostalgic return to his childhood,¹³³ and a crude but valuable attempt to preserve a hitherto ignored aspect of Iranian culture.

The sense of nostalgia is equalled in his next major piece of non fiction, but given extra bite by the first signs of the development of the idea which was to dominate the

130 Goftogu. Andisheh Va Honar op.cit. p.391.

131 Owrâzân, 8th ed. Ravâq and Mâzeyâr. Tehrân 1357 (1978)p.7.

132 Ibid. p.100. Translated by Simin Dâneshtar.

133 Goftogu. Andisheh Va Honar op.cit. p.391.

whole concept of gharb zadegi and his later writings; that the major culprit in the destruction of Iranian traditional cultural values was the alternative set of values accompanying the introduction of technology into Iran. Tāt Neshinhāye Boluke Zahrā is a similar study to Owrāzān, and concerns the villages of Ebrāhimābād and Sagzābād in Boluke Zahrā, to the north west of Tehrān, near Qazvin. Again his connection with the area was through his family,¹³⁴ and from the age of 6 or 7 he made regular trips from Tehrān, at first with his father and subsequently on his own, spending most of his school holidays in Sagzābād. The book is based on his diaries kept at the time of his visits, and added to during a journey carried out in the summer of 1955 accompanied by his brother Shams.¹³⁵ As with Owrāzān, the book deals with the way of life, customs, folklore and language of the area, with a similar nostalgia for rural culture, which he now sees as threatened by machines. He regrets the disruption caused to rural society by the introduction of mechanised mills,¹³⁶ and his comments on the "croaking" of machines now introduced into the villages.¹³⁷ He observes how machines are incompatible with aspects of traditional rural life;

"A strange thing is that in 'Bu'in', as in Ebrāhimābād, they wear peaked caps, shirts with collars and creased trousers. Well, there too they have a mechanised mill. ... inevitably the smoke and noise of machines cannot

134 His brother in law was the local Mulla. See chap.1, p.34

135 Tāt Neshinhā. op.cit. p.12.

136 Ibid. p.35.

137 Ibid. p.20.

be tolerated with the customary felt hat of the villagers. You must have a hat with a brim so that the smoke doesn't get in your eyes and you can pull the brim down over your ears". 138

Above all, he regrets the migration to the towns;

"Everywhere the villages are becoming depopulated. The rush to the towns. Another calamity of machines". 139

So here again his approach is purely cultural; a nostalgia for a traditional way of life preserved, he felt, by rural society; a regret for a culture threatened by values accompanying machines.

It is, however, with the publication of *Jazireye Khârg* that the full strength of his cultural approach to the problems of modernisation can be seen. In the early summer of 1958, he visited Khârg Island in the Persian Gulf at the invitation of the International Oil Consortium,¹⁴⁰ to carry out a brief study along the lines of *Owrâzân* and *Tât Neshinhâ*, on behalf of the NIOC, which was about to construct the vast oil terminal on the island.

Whereas *Owrâzân* was a nostalgic return to his childhood, and *Tât Neshinhâ* was similarly motivated, but with the first signs of his concern with machine-values and their effect on a traditional cultural unit, in *Jazireye Khârg*, he goes to war on the issue;

138 Ibid. p.36.

139 Ibid. p.39.

140 The invitation was instigated by the writer and one-time old friend of Jalâl, Ebrâhim Golestân, then working in the publications department of the NIOC.

"They had put bulldozers to clear everything away, and I wanted to rescue something from the middle of this". 141

Again there is the same overriding concern for a cultural unit, an emotional attachment to "Āb o Khāk"¹⁴² as the cultural basis of Iranian society, here threatened with obliteration in the name of technological progress.

On these three works, and his developing cultural approach, he writes;

"The attempt which was made in those two (Owrāzān and Tāt Neshinhā) was intended to give a hurried sketch of the contortions of two or three small economic and cultural units, that is two or three villages of this land in the face of the onslaught of machines and machine civilisation. But the attempt in this pamphlet (Khārg) is to show the disappearance of an economic and cultural unit of this land in the face of such unavoidable fate". 143

He is horrified at the destruction of traditional life on Khārg, and fears that his book will be the only heritage of Khārg remaining on "... the page of this deceiving, gharb zadeh age".¹⁴⁴ The fundamental problem he sees as;

".. with the compulsory acceptance of such development, must our personality, existence and local culture be ignored and wholly submit to that which machines dictate, and their experts who are both strangers to us and our customs and our mode of living?" 145

141 Goftogu. Andisheh Va Honar op.cit. pp.391-392.

142 Literally "water and earth", but has the connotations of "Mother Iran".

143 Jazireye Khārg. 4th ed. Sepāhi Tehrān. 2536 (1977) p.11.

144 Ibid. p.13.

145 Ibid. p.14.

The same concern for cultural values in the face of westernisation is seen in the first article of Seh Maqāleye Digar,¹⁴⁶ a history of the daily and weekly press since 1941. There is the same preoccupation with the way in which western values disrupt the balance of traditional Iranian life; the same emphasis on rural life (Āb o Khāk) as the basis of Iranian life in the sense of the repository of cultural values, and the same feeling of regret for the passing of traditional customs and practices. He considers the state of the Iranian press since 1953 to be characteristic of the tendency towards the acceptance of western values, resulting in a superficial and alien press divorced from the reality of the traditional society in which it exists. The press is;

".. like the display cases of large shops selling fancy goods, and like every other simulation with which in the name of western civilisation we give a transient and false varnish to our lives". 147

The result for the Iranian way of life is;

"A life free of originality and local colour. Empty of sincerity and full of foolishness, pretension and ignorance" 148

146 Var Shegastegiye Matbu'ât. Seh Maqāleye Digar. op.cit. pp.17-49. Jalāl wrote that the book Seh Maqāleye Digar was practice for the book Gharb Zadehi. Goftogu Andisheh Va Honar, op.cit. p.390.

147 Ibid. p.17.

148 Ibid. p.38.

The press, described as a wandering whore with a beautiful appearance covering filth and ugliness¹⁴⁹ is an example of the inappropriateness of western civilisation grafted onto a traditional society. Again it is rural society which is held to be the guarantor of Iranian cultural values, and as rural society is threatened by machines and their accompanying values, so are Iranian cultural values;

"The disgrace is that the very futile newspapers in all the villages are gradually replacing all other reading matter - the place of Mahbub al Qolub, and Hosseyne Kord and Za'farnāmeḥ and Āqe Vāledeyn - all of them with all their ridiculousness at least had a fluent language and clear intentions, and were free from personal interests ..." 150

And the corruption extends to the villager who;

".. in search of work flees from the village to the town so he can drink pepsi cola and eat a 5 grān sandwich, and see a Brigit Bardot film for 2 tomans. From a village where he has not seen his wife naked even once. Now in the towns they sell all this nakedness for two tomans". 151

The overall result is the creation of a people divorced from their environment, who;

".. have neither hope for the future, nor value their present at a halfpenny. People who have forgotten their past with those pilgrimages, beliefs and oaths, and their present is top to bottom imitation and monkey like". 152

149 Ibid. p.19.

150 Ibid. p.39.

151 Ibid. p.18.

152 Ibid. p.37.

Jalāl's emotional and nostalgic attachment to rural Iran, to a traditional way of life, traditional family relationships and the cultural values he felt were preserved in village life but threatened by western values, is reflected in Gharb Zadegi. Gharb Zadegi is the development of this approach found in his earlier works. He emphasises strongly the cultural basis of his analysis;

"The fundamental word of this booklet is that we cannot preserve our "cultural-historical" character in the face of machines and their predestined onslaught, but we will be annihilated". 153

The machine age has brought to Iran simply one requirement;

"that we bring ourselves out in the rough dimensions of machines - our governments, our cultures and our every day lives". 154

Yet at the same time, machines are a superimposition on a traditional society; an artificial grafting whereby Iran resembles;

"that donkey which dressed in a lion's skin. And we saw what happened to him". 155

153 Gharb Zadegi. op.cit. p.28.

154 Ibid. pp.27-28.

155 Ibid. p.28. This refers to a story from Kelileh Va Demneh, in which a donkey fell into a painter's pot and emerged looking like a lion, whereupon it frightened all the other donkeys. Then it rained, and the false authority of the donkey was revealed.

And the Iranian people are;

".. strangers unto themselves. In clothes, housing, food, customs and press. And more dangerous than all, in our culture". 156

"and well, why are not eastern nations aware of their own possessions? And why only by way of the fact that machines are western and we inevitably adopt them, do they also take all the other criteria of western life and supplement their own criteria of life and customs and art?" 157

The guarantor of the preservation of Iranian cultural values is traditional rural society. Here Jalâl differs from Maleki, whose fundamental concern for rural life was on the basis of the need for rural reform as precursor of all social progress in Iran, in other words a progressive concern for rural society. Jalâl, on the contrary, has an emotional and nostalgic concern for rural society as the guarantor and preserver of Iranian cultural values, in other words a conservative concern for rural society. His inherent emotional conservatism leads him to view with regret the modifications caused by machines to traditional Iranian life, as this threatens the cultural values he held so dear. Consequently he laments the rural-urban migration, as the villages are the basis of traditional Iranian society;

"Who are 'we'? Something like 19-20 million people of whom 75% live in villages or in tents, with customs of the period of the beginning of creation". 158

156 Ibid. p.78.

157 Ibid. p.208.

158 Ibid. p.91.

But these villages are

"day by day in the process of weakening and emaciating while newly founded towns are day by day in the process of expanding and growing ..." 159

The towns contain the worst aspects of imported western values;

".. these towns, each one itself a bazaar of disagreeable things of western goods". 160

ranging from Raleigh bicycles in Yazd, products of the Mitsubishi factory in Torbat Heydari, and Fords, Chevrolets and Fiats in Tehrân, to western clothes, food, television, cinemas, press and brothels . 161 The towns;

".. day by day demand more food of western goods, and day by day become more homogenous in decline and rootlessness and ugliness. Each one four streets with a statue according to an edict in the middle of the square 162, and ruined bazaars, districts cut off from each other, no water, electricity and telephone, no social services - free of social centres and libraries - ruined mosques and Hosseynis, and meaningless theatres..." 163

Similarly, he criticises the way in which the educational system fails to preserve traditional values, and indeed encourages people to accept western cultural criteria;

159 Ibid. pp.162-163.

160 Ibid. p.94.

161 Ibid. pp.94-96.

162 A reference to the habit of the Pahlavis of constructing statues of themselves in prominent places.

163 Ibid. p.163.

".. our schools make gharb zadeh. People emerge according to a plan. They produce prepared ground for accepting "gharb zadegi". This is the greatest danger of our schools and oud education". 164

Schools are built with no overall plan in mind, with more attention to quantity rather than quality, and with the chief object of producing government servants,¹⁶⁵ and

".. recently in the schools programme, there has been no trace of reliance upon custom; no trace of past culture; no substance of moral subject matter or philosophy and so sign of literature; no relation between yesterday and today, between house and school, between east and west, between the group and the individual". 166

In the Universities, traditional cultural values have given way to western values. Far from being centres of academic excellence, they barely deserve the name University.¹⁶⁷

Faculties of Science produce merely repairers of western goods,¹⁶⁸ Faculties of Fine Arts teach painting and architecture according to western criteria, Faculties of Literature, Law and Logic teach only in the most superficial, westernised way.¹⁶⁹

"and ethics, literature, Iranian and Islamic knowledge are ... daily becoming more worthless and distant.." 170

164 Ibid. p.106.
 165 Ibid. pp.177-178.
 166 Ibid. p.178.
 167 Ibid. p.180.
 168 Ibid. p.181.
 169 Ibid. pp.183-184.
 170 Ibid. p.186.

Jalâl's cultural approach enables him to effectively describe the faults and weaknesses of contemporary society. But he offers cultural solutions only in the most general terms. It is not clear, in *Gharb Zadegi*, what he means by "culture", and it is only from his description of how aspects of Iranian life have suffered that his view of "culture" may be implied.

In *Gharb Zadegi*, it is an Islamic, rurally orientated culture which he is concerned to preserve, because both Islam and the rural community are in turn the guarantors of an emotional, cultural identity - an indefinable feeling of being "Iranian", a sense of continuity interrupted by western technology and western values. Although undefined in *Gharb Zadegi*, he later describes the feeling as belonging to;

"A community which has lived here in fixed climatic and social conditions, with certain moral, religious and social criteria which as a result of their interrelated effects have produced a society called Iranian". 171

The cultural criteria, he describes as;

"One is religion, one is language, one is literature". 172

and he considers that he should seek his own identity in "Persian and Shi'ism". 173

171 Goftogu. *Kârnâme-yê Seh Sâleh*. op.cit. p.170.

172 Ibid. p.164.

173 Ibid. p.170.

Given Jalâl's philosophical and theoretical weakness, it would be wrong to expect him to have elaborated on his view of culture and its constituent elements. Consequently we need not be disappointed. Western anthropological definitions of culture have been equally vague. Malinowsky has defined it as;

".. the integral whole consisting of implements and consumers goods, of constitutional charters for the various social groupings, of human ideas and crafts, beliefs and customs ... a vast apparatus, partly material, partly human, and partly spiritual by which man is able to cope with the concrete, specific problems that face him". 174

and Radcliffe Brown has contented himself with stating that culture is a term which refers to;

".. a certain standardisation of behaviour, inner and outer, in a certain group of human beings, in a certain society". 175

and which may be reflected in;

".. a certain common set of ways of feeling and a certain common set of ways of thinking". 175

Nonetheless, it is unfortunate that Jalâl did not attempt to work out a more comprehensive definition of Iranian culture. As it stands, there are many questions left unanswered.

-
- 174 B. Malinowski. A scientific theory of culture and other essays. University of North Carolina. 1944. p.36.
 175 A.R. Radcliffe Brown. A Natural Science of Society. Free Press of Glencoe. 1964. pp.92 and 102.

It is not clear whether the emphasis on Persian and Shiism represent the personal identity of Jalāl, or are wider criteria contributing to the feeling of being 'an Iranian'. Unless 'religion, language and literature' are general criteria which allow for the existence of sub cultures with their own religion, languages and literatures within the greater cultural whole, then his criteria may be seen to be limited to an educated, urban, farsi speaking elite ... If the criteria are general then he does not explain the common link between himself, identified as a farsi speaking shiite, and for example, a sunni Baluchi tribesman. As the common link in this instance cannot be language, religion or literature, then what is it?

Thus against the background of a purely cultural orientation in *Gharb Zadegi*,¹⁷⁶ Jalāl Āle Ahmad sets his description of the contemporary state of Iranian society. And it is an almost exclusively negative view, of a

176 There is an interesting exception to Jalāl's cultural approach found in the report to the Harvard Seminar in summer 1965. In the Harvard speech, culture takes a back seat as "another problem" referred to briefly at the end of the text. Jalāl states that he is not worried about the disappearance of national cultures, because they will be replaced by a world culture - "a mixture of all the cultures" (*Kārnāmeḥ. op.cit. pp.122-123*). This view is directly opposed to the view in praise of national culture found in *Gharb Zadegi*, and where he castigates the prospect of cultural uniformity, suggesting that it leads to fascism. (*Gharb Zadegi, op.cit. p.202*). However, the views in the Harvard report are an aberration, possibly a result of the wide range of cultures represented at the Harvard Seminar. On his return to Iran, Jalāl once again became parochial in his outlook; "What are my characteristics as an Iranian? ... my characteristics are a compendium of cultural factors related to this society in which I live. One is religion, one is language, one is literature. These must be preserved". (*Goftogu. Kārnāmeḥ. op.cit. p.164*).

desecrated society slavishly bound to the guru of the west and western values. Iranian people are strangers to themselves, looking to the west for the solution to every problem; politically and economically subservient to the west; controlled by a government having only the appearance of democracy and maintaining its authority through an oversized army, SAVAK, through an education system geared to producing government servants, trained in western values, and assisted by control of the media. Rural society is disrupted, towns are a cancerous growth, the religious authorities have retired into a cocoon of superstition and ignorance, and those ordinary people who have not taken refuge in religion, have emerged as rootless, materialistic, superficial imitations of the western bourgeoisie.

Despite the philosophical, theoretical and historical faults, it was, for its time, a highly perceptive book. The faults with it as an academic work are its virtues as a popular work. The emotionalism, nostalgia, polemic, and hard hitting rejection of the way of life being imposed upon Iran, are its virtues. Its originality lies not in its analysis, nor in its solutions, but in its simple observation of what was happening. Gharb Zadegi, like all original work, seems to state the obvious. It does so in a way which rises above party-political divisions, internicine squabbles and the intricacies of academic debate. It may not have provided many answers, but at least it clearly and loudly stated the problem.

CHAPTER 3

RELIGION, THE RELIGIOUS AUTHORITIES

AND THE IRANIAN INTELLECTUAL

If the use and misuse of the term "gharb zadegi" both during the lifetime of Jalāl and particularly after his death, has tended to dominate the popular view of Jalāl, the development of his ideas beyond the basic analysis contained in the book *Gharb Zadegi* has, on the contrary, been virtually ignored. The value of *Gharb Zadegi*, as has been observed, lies not in its theoretical contribution to the debate on imperialism, but in its simple observation of what was happening in Iran, focussed on a condemnation of the cultural imperialism of coca-cola values. From 1962, Jalāl's increasing concern was with the role of religion, the religious authorities and of the Iranian intellectual in damming the cultural flood of westernisation, and consequently opposing the regime in Iran and its western supporters.

The role of religion, the religious authorities and of the Iranian intellectual is seen by Āle Ahmad within the context of roles for language and literature in the preservation of Iranian cultural values and political integrity. The crucial cultural criteria, he described as;

"One is religious, one is language, one is literature". 1

1 Āle Ahmad, *Goftogu, Kārنامه‌ی Seh Sāleh*, Zamān, n.d.

While his thinking on the question of language appears curiously naive, his call for a wider teaching of traditional and classical Persian literature is a more immediately obvious step towards the strengthening of Iranian cultural values. In neither case, however, were his ideas developed satisfactorily. His earlier references to language as a cultural value include a rather late addition to the debate on the latinisation of the Persian alphabet, to which he was opposed.² At the same time he was concerned to preserve the local dialects,³ and his early and for Iran original work in this area led to his appointment as supervisor for a series of monographs on specific areas of Iran under the auspices of the Institute of Social Studies and Research, University of Tehrân from 1962. While he did not resolve the complexities of the potential conflict between cultural minorities and political entities, he continued to give weight to the importance of local dialects and languages within a cultural whole, with the inbuilt assumption of the pre-eminence of Fârsi.⁴ He gave some consideration to the cultural question of Āzerbâijân, and while encouraging

2 Chand Nokte Dar Bâreye Khat Va Zabâne Fârsi. In Seh Maqaleye Digar, Ravâq 3rd ed. pp.52-78. 1st published in 'Elm o Zendegi, Farvardin 1339 March/April 1960.

3 The final chapters of his monographs consist of dictionaries of dialect, phrases and grammar of the area. Owrâzân, Dânesht, Orbidehesht 1332 (1954) Tât Neshinhâye Boluke Zahrâ, Dânesht Mehr 1337 (1958), and Jazireye Khârg, Dorre Yatime Khaliye Fârs, Dânesht? 1339 (1960).

4 He describes Fârsi as the lingua franca (zabâne 'omumi) of all Iran. Goftogu'i Darâz Bâ Dâneshtjuyâne Tabriz. Kârnameye Seh Sâleh Ketâbe Zamân. nd. pp.201-2.

the local importance of Àzeri, as part of an Iranian cultural heritage,⁵ widened its nationalist limits by disarmingly stating elsewhere that;

"I want to learn Turkish to the same extent that I want to learn German". 6

On the question of literature, he was more eclectic, calling quite simply for the preservation of and teaching of not only classical Persian literature but also popular folk literature.⁷ His concern for the creation of new lessons in schools in popular and religious stories⁸ is reflected in his own efforts to preserve local stories and lullabies displayed in his three monographs.

The more controversial aspect of his thinking, however, concerns the role of religion, the religious authorities and the Iranian intellectual. The thread of continuity running through the articles included in *Seh Maqàleye Digar* and the book *Gharb Zadegi* is extended to include the observations and recommendations found in many of his later works and interviews, and the essence of his ideas is contained in

5 Dar Khedmat Va Khiyânate Rowshanfekrân, Enteshârâte Khwârazmi 1357 (1978). Vol.2, pp.105ff. and 132ff. Following his visit to Tabriz in Ordibehesht 1346 (April/May 1967), he was involved with Sâ'edi and Behrangi and Behruz Dowlatâbâdi in producing "Tarhe Pishnehâdi Barâye Tahieye Yek Gozâreshe Kâmel Az Tabriz. "Sahand, Daftare Avval. Spring 1349 (1970). It is the plan of an uncompleted study of Àzerbâijân, to be published by the Institute of Social Studies and Research, University of Tehrân.

6 Kârnâmeh. op.cit. p.171.

7 Var Shegastegiye Matbu'ât. Seh Maqàleh. op.cit. p.39.

8 Chand Nokte. Seh Maqàleh, op.cit. pp.76-78.

the collection of articles entitled *Dar Khedmat Va Khiyânate Rowshanfekrân* (On the Service and the Treachery of the Intellectuals). *Dar Khedmat Va Khiyânate Rowshanfekrân* has, like *Gharb Zadegi*, had a chequered career. The first plan of the work was made in Dey 1342 (December 1963/January 1964), stirred by the events of the 15th Khordâd 1352 (June 1963). By spring of 1965, the first handwritten draft was completed, and 10 to 15 photocopies were given out to his friends for their observations.⁹ In 1966, two chapters of the work appeared in the magazine *Jahâne Now*,¹⁰ then edited by Rezâ Barâheni, and the work was not republished in any uncensored form until the much revised text was published in two editions in 1357 (1978) and 1358 (1979).¹¹

The book is a documented survey of the intellectual and intellectualism. Âle Ahmad surveys the origins of the term 'intellectual', considers whether the intellectual in Iran is a local phenomenon, or an alien impostor, and examines the historical roots of the Iranian intellectual. He continues to examine the roles of the military and religious authorities as types of traditional intellectuals, and concludes by lamenting the position of contemporary intellectuals, while upholding Khalil Maleki as an example of intellectual excellence.

However, behind this lengthy and generalised survey,

9 He acknowledges the assistance of F. Âdamiyat, Gholâm Rezâ Emâmi, Nâser Pâkdâman, Hosseyn Malek, Khalil Maleki and Manuchehr Hazarkhâni. *Rowshanfekrân* 1: 16.

10 *Jahâne Now*, No's. 4-5, and 6-7. 1345 (1966).

11 *Enteshârâte Khwârazmi* 1357 and *Ravâq*. Tehrân 1358.

there lies a kernel of ideas which although they give a backbone to a book which otherwise would be a school-masterly skate through the misfortunes of Iranian history, are no more original, in essence than the ideas contained in the book *Gharb Zadegi*.

Âle Ahmad's ideas on religion, the religious authorities and the Iranian intellectual contain three interrelated aspects and can be seen to extend from their basis in *Gharb Zadegi*.¹² First, Âle Ahmad saw religion as a cohesive social and cultural force, and as a potential force for political opposition. Secondly, that the religious authorities have, through their traditional role of leaders of opposition to oppressive government, the ability to lead Iranian opposition to the desecration of Iranian cultural values and to the Pahlavi regime and colonial exploitation. Thirdly, that the Iranian intellectual should seek his identity in Iran, not in the west, and should join with the religious authorities in spearheading this opposition.

Âle Ahmad's view of religion is pragmatic. He sees religion as a cultural and social cohesive force. It is not so much that religion in general or specifically Shi'ism has particular qualities which are universally necessary for the conduct of society, but that in the absence of any other social or political cohesive force, religion is better than nothing;

"I think that in this area free from all kinds of criteria this criterion of religion, ... is a footprint".¹³

12 *Gharb Zadegi*, op.cit. p.82. And chapter 2 above, p.63.

13 *Goftogu Bâ Jalâl Âle Ahmad*. Andisheh Va Honar 5th period No.4. p.398.

He is quite ready to dispense with religion if the political, economic and social climate are sufficiently modernised to render it unnecessary. Questioned as to whether belief can govern a society, he replied;

"It depends on how you look at it. In a progressive machine-struck country, there is no need for 'doctrine' or a belief in its old sense. But when you're talking about my area, which has devalued spiritual criteria, but not replaced it with secular criteria ... perhaps I sometimes search for such a criterion". 14

Personally, in an orthodox sense, Àle Ahmad was irreligious, although some of his statements are somewhat ambiguous, and indicate, if anything, a nostalgic attachment to an idea of fundamentalist Pan-Islam. He considered his personal cultural background to be Shii Islam,¹⁵ yet was opposed to the religious divisions within Islam, which he considered to be politically and culturally divisive, and upheld his youthful rejection of the seal used by Shii's whilst praying as an example of his dedication to the ideal of Islamic unity.¹⁶ Elsewhere, he regrets the Sunni-Shii division within Islam,¹⁷ whilst on the two published occasions he is questioned as to his own religion, on one he avoids the question altogether,¹⁸ while on the other states;

14 Ibid. pp.394-395.

15 "My traditional background in any case is Islam". Goftogu Andisheh Va Honar op.cit. p.339. Elsewhere he states that the roots of Iran lie in Shiism. Kàrnàmeh, op.cit. p.170.

16 Rowshanfekràn. op.cit. 1:181. It is, however, more likely that this act was one of youthful rebellion against a strict and overbearing father, rather than an ideologically sound move, indicating the unity of Islam. See chapter 1 p. above.

17 Gharb Zadegi, op.cit. pp.69-70. Khasi Dar Miqàt, Amir Kabir 1357 (1978) p.73.

18 Kàrnàmeh, op.cit. p.201.

"I wanted to have the religion of the Muslims at the start of Islam ..." 19

However, although Jalāl may have, in nostalgic moments, wished that religious life was as simple as it appeared to have been in the early days of Islam, the evidence suggests that the lack of development of his ideas on Pan Islamic revivalism in his published works was in fact matched by an equal lack of orthodox religious fervour within himself. Āyatollah Tāleqāni has observed that whilst attending his meetings on the interpretation of the Qor'ān, Āle Ahmad was in fact interested in customs and tradition (sonnat),²⁰ in other words the cultural aspect of religion as opposed to its theological content, and it is hardly an orthodox standpoint to state whilst on the pilgrimage;

"I remember the morning in the Pilgrim's area of Tehrān airport I prayed. After I don't know how many years. Surely since abandoning praying in the first class of university ... I used to ablute, and pray, and sometimes pray at night... But truthfully I haven't got the patience. I feel that it is hypocrisy. That it doesn't come out right. It may not be hypocrisy, but it isn't belief. Its only so you mingle with the crowd ..." 21

Elsewhere he compares religion to a trade;

"If we want to talk plainly, every religion turns into a trade where a number earn their living. And when anything becomes a trade, a certain amount of dry and fossilised civil and religious regulations appear which hinder the fundamental principals".

19 Khasi Dar Miqāt. op.cit. p.100.

20 Āyatollah Tāleqāni, in Keyhān 13 Shavval 1399 (Sept. 1979).

21 Khasi Dar Miqāt. op.cit. p.10.

But he optimistically suggests;

"... a religion can rid itself of the evil of these hindrances so that it can continually preserve in itself the same first impetus". 22

Religion, for Āle Ahmad, was not only a social and cultural cohesive force, but was also a potential force for political opposition, based on the political theory of Ithnā 'Ashari Shii Islam, whereby legitimate rule belongs to the infallible Imamate, and succession passed through the twelve descendants of the Imām 'Ali, the last of whom, Mohammad Ibn al Hasan, al Mahdi, disappeared in 874 A.D. In the absence of the Imam, and until his return restores just and legitimate government, all states therefore are usurpers.²³ Using this theory with regard to the oppressive and unjust Pahlavi regime, Āle Ahmad considered that the 90% of the population who lived according to religious criteria and felt;

"the government to be the perpetrators of oppression and usurpers of the right of the Imam of the time ..." 24

22 Kārنامه. op.cit. p.163.

23 See H. Algar. *Oppositional Role of the Ulema in 20th Century Iran*, in N. Keddie, *Scholars, Saints and Sufis*, University of California Press, 1972, pp.231-255. N. Keddie, *Roots of the Ulemas Power in Modern Iran*. *Studia Islamica* 1969 XXIX pp.31-53. A.K.S. Lambton, *Reconsideration of the position of Marja' al Taqlid*. *Studia Islamica* XX 1964 pp.115-135. Abdol Hādi Hā'eri, *Shiism and Constitutionalism in Iran*. Brill. 1977. S. Akhavi, *Religion and Politics in Contemporary Iran*. SUNY 1980. M.M.J. Fischer, *Iran from Religious Dispute to Revolution*. Harvard University Press. 1980.

24 Gharb Zadegi, op.cit. p.104.

were thus justified in withholding taxes, deceiving government officials and being otherwise obstructive. Thus the fact that Shii Islam denies;

"the principle that the ruler of the time is selected by the world above and is the representative of God, and so must be obeyed". 25

resulted in the potentiality of a revolutionary force lying in Shiism itself, and of the religion acting as a

"seed for every uprising in the face of the government of the oppressors and corrupt people". 26

Àle Ahmad argued that the religious authorities had, through their traditional role as leaders of this potentially political role of religion in opposition to oppressive government, the ability to lead Iranian opposition to the desecration of Iranian cultural values and to the Pahlavi regime. This idea, based on Shii doctrine of the Osuli school, argues that, in the absence of the Imam, the religious authorities have through the doctrine of ejtehād, the "ability to make an independent decision based on the Qor'ân and hadith, on matters not in conflict with Islamic principles".²⁷ Through this doctrine, therefore, the religious community is guided by the mojtaheds, (led by the Marja' or Marâji' e taqlid if in existence) and guidance can be given on political matters to the extent, if necessary, of opposing the

25 Rowshanfekrân. op.cit. I:141.

26 Gharb Zadeqi op.cit. p.82 and see Chapter 2 p. 63 above.

27 Abdol Hâdi Hâ'eri, op.cit. p.62.

state.²⁸

Āle Ahmad, by using this theory, and by considering the Ulema as defenders of custom and tradition, envisaged a contemporary political role for the religious authorities, but was dismissive of the reality of their role in Pahlavi Iran. He confirms, in Rowshanfekrān, his earlier view that in the face of the modern world, the religious authorities are ossified, have disappeared within themselves, shut off the outside world, and have woven a cocoon around themselves, and that under such leadership, religion has turned into superstition.²⁹ He describes the religious establishment as seen through the experience of his own family as spiritually fanatical, raw, narrow minded and hypocritical.³⁰ He admits that their past political involvement has not on the whole been progressive,³¹ but nevertheless considers that they are a force in Iran which cannot be ignored;

"Shii religious authorities, by reason of defence of custom are a kind of power of resistance in the face of the onslaught of colonialism of which the first step is the custom-cultural plunder of each area. In this way, the religious authorities are a dam in the face of the 'gharb zadegi' of the intellectuals, and also in the face of unquestioning obedience to the governments, the west, and their colonialism".³²

28 Floor, however, argues against the view that, through the doctrine of ejtehād, opposition to tyranny is a fundamental characteristic of Shii Islam. He states that the revolutionary character of Shii Ulema in Iran has been greatly exaggerated. W.M. Floor, *The Revolutionary Character of the Iranian Ulema. Wishful Thinking or Reality?* Berliner Institut für Vergleichende Sozialforschung. 1980.

29 Rowshanfekrān, op.cit. 2:33 and see Gharb Zadegi, op.cit. pp.77-78, p.107.

30 Rowshanfekrān, op.cit. I:180.

31 Ibid. 2:13.

32 Ibid. 2:32-33.

Àle Ahmad felt that the Iranian intellectual should seek his identity in Iran, not in the west, and should, in conjunction with the religious authorities, spearhead the opposition. However, he did not flatter his contemporaries, and, in Rowshanfekrân, repeats his earlier rather wild attacks on those suffering from gharb zadegi.³³ He again accuses the Iranian intellectual of working according to western criteria, and as a result, being out of place in Iran. He variously describes them as flashy (fokoli) and irreligious,³⁴ weak,³⁵ and suggests they should at the very least balance criteria they wish to adopt from the west with indigenous criteria.³⁶ As it is, he accuses them of discussing 'science', 'democracy' and 'freethinking' in an area where these ideas have no foundation, but are concepts imported from the west, of being out of touch with ordinary people, and exercising their thoughts not over the question of politics, which is dangerous, but taking refuge in issues such as religion, history, morals and language.³⁷ However, encouraging the intellectual to take a politically active role, Àle Ahmad observes that the Iranian intellectual should note the potential role of the religious authorities as

33 Gharb Zadegi, op.cit. Chapter 9.

34 Rowshanfekrân, op.cit. I:43-44.

35 Ibid. 2:149-157.

36 Ibid. 2:279.

37 A fine example of Jalâl's fictionalised gharb zadeh intellectual (and an equally fine example of his invective) is found in the story Khodâdâd Khân, published in the collection Zane Ziyâdi, Ravâq, 5th ed. Bahman 1356 (1978) pp.109-130. As usual with Jalâl, fiction is based on fact, and Khodâdâd Khân is a scurrilous caricature of the worst aspects of the personality of Ehsân Tabari, Jalâl's one time mentor and colleague in the Tudeh Party. See Chapter 1 p. 5 above.

leaders of resistance, in view of the Shii theory of the absence of the need to obey temporal authority.³⁸ He considers the effectiveness of alliances between the intellectuals and the religious authorities in the past, surveying the protests against the tobacco concession in 1891, the constitutional movement, the establishment of Rezā Shāh on the throne, the inter war years, the struggle for the nationalisation of oil, and the events of 1962-63, and states that on the two occasions both groups cooperated, (1907 and 1951-3), they were successful, whereas on other occasions they were not. He writes;

"everywhere the religious authorities and the intellectuals of the time work together or follow each other, there is success in the social struggle, and progress, another step towards evolution and change, and whenever these two are opposed to each other and turn their backs on each other, or took part in the struggle individually, they have socially lost and moved backwards, and taken steps towards decline".³⁹

And he laments;

"If the intellectual and the religious leader did not each play a different tune, and at critical moments acted shoulder to shoulder, such mistakes and failures would never happen".⁴⁰

The key response for Àle Ahmad then, to the overall situation of Pahlavi oppression, foreign domination and the division between the intellectuals and the religious authorities, was an alliance of those two groups. He also allows

38 Rowshanfekrān, 2:33.

39 Ibid. 2:52.

40 Ibid. 2:68.

that the government should recognise the responsibilities of the religious authorities according to Supplementary Article 2 of the Constitutional Law of 1907, or that the law should be reformed, and Iran declared a country of no official religion, but where all religions are recognised. He also considers that the religious authorities must revise their opinions on matters such as the veil, and become more progressive, and finally, if the two groups do not unite in the face of the government, the intellectuals should take over the duties of the religious authorities.⁴¹

Thus the basic ideas of Āle Ahmad on the question of how to effectively unite the country in the face of oppressive government and western domination are not particularly refined. *Dar Khedmat Va Khiyānate Rowshanfekrān*, in which the nucleus of these ideas is contained, shows many of the same characteristics as the book *Gharb Zadegi*, in that it is disordered, repetitious and while it makes basic and simple points, the bulk of the work consists in a justification of in this case a hoped for situation; that is a justification of an alliance between Iranian intellectuals and the religious authorities.

At first glance, Āle Ahmad's attempt to find common ground between his two extremes of the *gharb zadeh* Iranian intellectual on the one hand and the ossified mulla on the other would seem to be an uphill task. Fortunately, however, Jalāl did not allow the limits of theoretical validity nor practical reality to interfere with his imagination, and

41 Ibid. 2:72-73.

he constructed an elaborate theory which firmly united the two unsavoury characters in positions of joint responsibility in the leadership of Iranian society. Islam is the key. On the one hand he attempts to settle the Iranian intellectual into a traditional background, while on the other updates the role of the religious authorities, involving them in the modern world and politics. Islam and Islamic culture was to give roots to the intellectual, and political activity was to give contemporary involvement to the Mullas, against a changing society, where a world dominated by natural phenomena and religious beliefs was giving way to a scientific modern society. A society where man;

".. has become cut off from natural factors and remained alone ... in the face of his fate with no heavenly or earthly support, and is compelled to act with no expectation from ... the upper world and only with reliance upon himself. He is independent. He is free, and responsible". 42

Having surveyed the origins of the term 'intellectual', and admitted its European bourgeois origins, Àle Ahmad concentrates on the Iranian counterpart. He divides Iranian intellectuals into two types; those who assist the ruling establishment in Iran, (the majority), and those who do not (the minority). He states that the majority possess the minimum of intellectualism while the minority possess the maximum of intellectualism.⁴³ He feels that the number of true intellectuals (the minority) is less than one hundred. He then subdivides Iranian intellectuals as a whole and

42 Ibid. I:29.

43 Ibid. I:81.

represents the divisions as five concentric circles, starting with writers, inventors and scholars in the centre, surrounded by professors, critics, lawyers and teachers; then doctors and technicians, surrounded by clerical workers and students, and finally, those involved in the media.⁴⁴

However, the occupational characteristics of the true Iranian intellectual are second to two fundamental criteria. First, they should be concerned with 'the word' (Kalâm),⁴⁵ and secondly they should have the characteristics of erudition, leadership, enquiry, and dissatisfaction with the existing situation.⁴⁶ The intellectual is;

"a questioner, a rejector, in search of a better way ... a non acceptor".⁴⁷

Regretting that hitherto "noone ... has considered any Mulla or religious writer or preacher to be an intellectual ...",⁴⁸ Āle Ahmad sets out to redress the balance. He argues that according to the above criteria, religious leaders may also be classified as intellectuals. He argues that they are involved with 'the word', (Kalâm); they have the reputation of being learned; they have the qualities of leadership; and, in the sense of opposition to the Pahlavi regime and western imperialism, are discontented with the existing situation.⁴⁹ Accordingly, Āle Ahmad subdivides the various ranks of religious authority and includes them in the series

44 Ibid. I:80-88.

45 Ibid. I:82.

46 Ibid. I:127.

47 Ibid. I:143.

48 Ibid. I:13.

49 Ibid. 2:69.

of concentric circles allocated to the intellectuals. Reserving, however, the centre circle exclusively for writers, inventors and scholars, he places progressive Sāhebāne Fatwā (highest rank religious leaders, usually Āyatollahs) in the circle immediately surrounding the centre, followed by Khotabā (preachers), Vo'āz (preachers/orators), and Ruhāniyāne Tarāze Avval (those of the rank of Hojatuleslam), surrounded by Akhunds, prayer leaders and town and village mullas, and finally Rowzekwānhā, Manbarihā, and Maddāhhā (travelling preachers, reciters), in the rank equivalent to those propagandist intellectuals involved in the media.⁵⁰ In this way, Āle Ahmad, in his attempt to justify an alliance of the intellectuals and the religious authorities, finds common ground between the two groups by redefining the term intellectual to include the religious authorities. However, he extends the area of common ground between the two groups considerably farther. He argues a traditional role for Iranian intellectuals; that Shii Islam was a movement of intellectuals; and he reaffirms that the religious authorities through the doctrines of entezār and ejtehād, have a progressive role to play.

He states that the fundamental origin of the native intellectual arises from oppression; where the government has moved away from justice, fairness and 'the word' (Kalām). The intellectual questions this, protests against it, and seeks a better road.⁵¹ Accordingly, argues Āle Ahmad,

50 Ibid. 2:70.

51 Ibid. I:142-143.

virtually every opposition movement or figure in Iranian history from Gaumātā, Zoroaster, Māni, Mazdak, the Zendi movement in early Islam, the Esmā'ilis, as well as such individuals as Abu Raihān Biruni, Rudaki, Nāser Khosro, Ferdowsi, and Sādeq Hedāyat, qualify for being part of the true Iranian intellectual movement, including Shiism itself.⁵² The movement, he claims;

".. at least in their leadership, are kinds of dispositions towards intellectualism of their time". 53

and the common factor was the leader or individual;

"a man, intellectual, and with a claim, with the intention of reform or change in the conditions of the time, and a view of his contemporary society, with the influence of the word (Kalām)". 54

Thus, having linked the religious authorities with the intellectuals by redefinition of terms, Āle Ahmad then attempts to give the intellectual a traditional background rooted in Iranian history as inheritors of the tradition of opposition to oppressive government. However, not content to leave well alone, Āle Ahmad then claims that intellectuals were successors to the contemporary Vazir,⁵⁵ and indeed, successors to the Prophets. He argues that when

52 For a full list see Ibid. I:chapter 3.

53 Ibid. I:138.

54 Ibid. I:139.

55 Ibid. I:140. He argues that the Vazir in his advisory role represents Kalām in government and was the necessary balance to the commands (amr) of the Amir.

events were governed natural phenomena, the possessors of 'Kalâm' were usually prophets.⁵⁶ But, in contemporary times, as the metaphysical, spiritual and natural world loses its influence over man;

"Prophets give up their places to thinkers, writers and intellectuals".⁵⁷

Thus, he writes;

".. if we consider 'zendeqeh' and 'apostasy' (ertedâd) and 'rejection' (matrudi) to be the first stage of intellectualism-prophethood, and its last stage is 'miracle' (mo'jezeh) ... if these days there is no longer a 'miracle' in affairs ... it is because it is the end of the age of prophethood. But the 'apostasy' of intellectualism remains. And 'the word' (kalâm) has replaced miracle".⁵⁸

In this way, Âle Ahmad makes direct parallels between opposite movements, prophethood, and the contemporary intellectual. He updates the triumvirate 'apostasy-prophet-miracle' to the contemporary 'apostasy-responsibility (amânat)-influence of the word'⁵⁹ and thus seeks to justify a traditional role for the contemporary intellectual with a religious dimension.

Islam, by virtue of its denial of the principle that the ruler of the time is selected by the world above, is the representative of God and so must be obeyed, is an important part of the intellectual tradition. The supremacy

56 Ibid. I:140-141.

57 Ibid. I:141.

58 Ibid. I:144.

59 Ibid. I:144.

of spiritual authority, as transferred through the miracle, or Kalâm, of the Prophet of Islam, over temporal authority, transferred through the 'amr' (order, command) of the civil governors, and the mere toleration of just secular authority in the absence of the Imam ensures, for Âle Ahmad, that Islam has the potentiality, if not the actuality, of intellectualism;

"Shiism, in the beginning was a kind of intellectual movement in the time of the Umayyad and Abbâsid Caliphates which had emerged as imitators of Empire and Monarchy". 60

Thus the Shii religious authorities in Iran, (defined by Âle Ahmad as belonging to the same group as intellectuals) through the oppositional nature of Shiism, through the doctrine of entezâr, and through the potentially progressive doctrine of ejtehâd, have a politically active role to play in the contemporary world.

In summary, then, the development of Âle Ahmad's political views beyond the analysis contained in the book Gharb Zadegi consists essentially in one proposition; that Iranian intellectuals and the religious authorities should unite to oppose the oppressive government of the Pahlavi regime, and western domination. This, in itself, is not an original suggestion. The problem of the division of interests between the radical forces and the religious authorities in Iran is long standing. Most intellectual writers have considered the problem, and the majority have acknowledged the

fact that the religious authorities are a force which cannot be ignored, and hence the need to present reforms in a way which is acceptable to the religious authorities. Maldom Khàn, for example, viewing the introduction of western values into Iran as a remedy to tyrannical government and foreign domination was nonetheless concerned to reconcile western constitutional reform with Islam,⁶¹ and was at least prepared to argue that Shiism contained, through the doctrine of ejtehād, the roots of parliamentary reform.⁶² Writing in 1892, he states;

"During more than 30 years in all my political writings my constant effort has been to show that the spirit of true Islam is in perfect harmony with the principles of the present and coming civilisation of the world ..."⁶³

yet himself, in reality, saw religion as little more than a question of social regulation.⁶⁴ Although Ākhundzādeh was an exception, and not concerned to reconcile Islam and modernism, and was openly hostile to Islam,⁶⁵ Mirzā Āqa Khàn, Kermāni, despite being opposed to the Ulema, saw the political necessity of seeking their assistance, and indeed, felt that the religious authorities were crucial to the success

61 Abdol Hādi Hā'eri, Shiism and Constitutionalism in Iran, op.cit. p.39. N. Keddie, Roots of the Ulemas Power in Modern Iran. op.cit. p.73.

62 H. Algar, Mirza Malkom, Khàn. Univ. California Press, 1973.

63 Letter in Pall Mall Gazette, December 30 1892, quoted by N. Keddie in Religion and Rebellion in Iran. Cass 1966. p.132.

64 H. Algar. op.cit. p.207.

65 F. Ādamiyat, Andishehāye Mirzā Fath'ali Ākhundzādeh, Tehrān 1349 (1970) pp.156 and Abdol Hādi Hā'eri, op.cit. pp.27-28.

of the movement against the establishment.⁶⁶ He also related the idea of an oppositional role of Shiism against the state to 'Ali, the first Imam.⁶⁷ Àle Ahmad is however, perhaps 'closest to Afghàni, who was opposed to corrupt and absolute government and foreign domination, and advocated Islamic unity to fight these two,⁶⁸ yet possessed a pragmatic view of religion, whereby;

"Religion is that which constitutes a nation, a culture, or a civilisation, forms its basis and foundation, and provides the most secure bond that holds it together".⁶⁹

Afghàni, in addition, idealised the age of the Prophet and the first four Caliphs, favoured the reinterpretation of the scriptures when in conflict with science, and, above all, unity through Islam.

Àle Ahmad's proposition that when the intellectuals and the religious authorities work together, they are successful, and when they are divided, they fail, is false in that it presupposes a unity within each individual group which has never existed. The plethora of political opinion amongst the group loosely described by Àle Ahmad 'the intellectuals'

66 F. Àdamiyat, *Ide'olozhiye Nahzate Mashrutiyate Iràn, Enteshàrâte Payàm*, 2535 (1976) p.29. H. Algar op.cit. pp.215-224.

67 F. Àdamiyat, *Andishehàye Mirzà Aqà Khàn Kermàni, Enteshàrâte Payàm*, 1357 p.246.

68 F. Àdamiyat. *Ide'olozhi*, op.cit. p.32ff.

69 M. Mahdi, *Islamic Philosophy in Contemporary Islamic Thought*, in C. Malik, *God and Man in Contemporary Islamic Thought*, American University of Beirut, 1972, p.106. And see N. Keddie, *Origins of the Religious-Radical Alliance in Iran*, in *Iran, Religion, Politics and Society*, Cass. 1980 pp.53-65 and N. Keddie, *An Islamic Response to Imperialism*, University of California Press, 1968, for Afghàni's pragmatic view of religion.

has revealed itself at every major crisis in contemporary Iranian history, and the political predictability of the religious authorities acting as a united force is equally hard to discern. Although in the constitutional movement, the majority of the Ulema, including men such as Sayyeds Mohammad Tabātabā'i, Abdollah Behbehāni, and Hasan Modarres supported such intellectual constitutionalists as Mirzā Jahāngir Khān (who in turn was careful to present his constitutional ideas in a manner acceptable to the religious authorities), the opposition of a small group of Ulema, led by Sheykh Fazlullah Nuri, was vociferous.⁷⁰ The differences between the politically active Āyatollah Kāshāni and the quiescent and politically retiring Āyatollah Borujerdi has been observed in the years building up to the nationalisation of oil,⁷¹ and during the events of 1961-1963, four separate groups within the religious hierarchy have been distinguished, ranging from Āyatollah Mahdavi, who cooperated with the Court, to Āyatollah Khomeyni.⁷²

Echoing the simplicity of Āle Ahmad's historical perspectives, is his view that the intellectual and the religious leader have a common background, common interests, and indeed spring from the same group of questioners, rejectors and non acceptors.⁷³ In order to achieve this unholy alliance,

70 N. Keddie, *Roots of the Ulema's Power in Modern Iran*, op.cit. pp.31-33. A.K.S. Lambton, *Reconsideration*, op.cit. p.117. S. Akhavi, op.cit. F. Ādamiyat, *Ide'olozhi*, op.cit. p.147ff. E.G. Browne, *The Persian Revolution of 1905-1909*, Cambridge, 1910. Āle Ahmad felt that the death of Nuri represented the victory of gharb zadeh values over Iran. Gharb Zadegi, op.cit. p.78.

71 S. Akhavi, op.cit.

72 Ibid. pp.100-103.

73 See p.108 above.

he strips both groups of their distinguishing characteristics, reduces them to the lowest common denominator, and states that as they are both opposed to the status quo, they both therefore have the same interests, and thus form part of the group 'intellectuals'. In practice, the value of this justification would seem to be limited. Further, he states that the crucial common factor is that both groups are concerned with 'the word' (kalām). His use of the 'word' (kalām) is confusing. When referring to intellectuals, he means a scale of values with creative writing at its apex, and mere propaganda at the base. Using Kalām in relation to the religious authorities, he seems to mean the concern of the Ulema with the shari'a. He also uses the word in terms of government, apparently equivalent to justice, and in order to link the intellectuals with a religious background, describes them as heirs to the 'kalām' of the prophets, in other words the scriptures. While many may argue that there is much in common between the Holy books and modern fiction, it is not a theologically sound argument, and perhaps indicates the length Āle Ahmad was prepared to go to prove his point. Similarly, the reduction of every opposition movement in Iran including Shiism itself to an intellectual movement on the grounds that they questioned the status quo is of limited historical value and in fact is nothing more than an attempt to make the Iranian intellectual feel at home.

Why, then, it must be asked, was Āle Ahmad apparently so concerned to reconcile the differences between the Iranian intellectual and the religious authorities to the extent of

writing a rambling and occasionally spacious work in the shape of *Dar Khedmat Va Khiyânate Rowshanfekrân*? It is suggested that there are three factors which go some way towards providing an answer.

First, the vision of a united opposition to Pahlavi oppression, western exploitation and western cultural domination was attractive. The idea of an alliance between the religious authorities, with their ability to move the population, and the intellectuals, with, they felt, their ability to lead a constitutional, democratic political entity, was a good one, and although it was a vision which had concerned and plagued Iranian intellectuals for a century, the efficacy of such an alliance in the light of the revolution of 1979 cannot be denied.⁷⁴ For Āle Ahmad, as for many others, the power of alliances of certain sections of both groups had manifested itself in the experiences of 1907 and 1951-53, yet such an alliance carried through to the point of actually breaking the established regime in Iran had remained one of the great 'ifs' of Iranian history.

Secondly, during the 1950's and early 1960's, there was a movement in Iran towards a reappraisal of the political role of religion in which at least some intellectuals were involved, and the radical position taken up by Āyatollah Khomeyni from 1961 in opposition to the Pahlavi regime emphasised the potential power of the religious opposition and gave a practical dimension to a theoretical enquiry.

74 Although subsequent events indicate the hollowness of Jalāl's claim to common background and interests between the *Rowshanfekrân* and the *Ruhāniyân*.

During the 1950's and early 1960's, there was a revival of interest in the possibility of an increased political role for the Ulema, whilst moves were made towards establishing closer contacts between some of the Ulema and sympathetic intellectuals. Āyatollah Sayyed Mahmud Tāleqāni, ✓ a cousin of Jalāl, was calling for an active role in government for the Ulema from the early 1950's, a claim repeated by Sayyed Morteżā Jazā'eri in a lecture in 1962, and again in a book entitled *Two Religions*, by Sayyed Hādi Khosroshāhi, published in 1964.⁷⁵ Various Islamic societies, which had shown signs of considering reform in the late 1950's, were encouraged in this direction following the death of the politically quiescent Marja' al taqlid Āyatollah Borujerdi in March 1961, and discussed the function and choice of the Marja'al taqlid, the doctrine of ejtehād, and other religious, social and political problems.⁷⁶ The Freedom Movement, founded in Ordibehesht 1340 (May 1961) and led by Mehdi Bāzargān, Dr. Yadollah Sahābi, and Āyatollah Sayyed Mahmud Tāleqāni, was especially concerned to create the maintain links between the Ulema and other elements opposed to the regime.⁷⁷

These moves coincided with an apparent increase in oppressive government. On the 9th May 1961, the Shāh dissolved the 20th Majles on the grounds of voting irregularities

75 A.S. Akhavi, op.cit. p.24.

76 A.K.S. Lambton. *Reconsideration ...* op.cit.. S. Akhavi, op.cit. p.119. Some of the discussions provoked at this time were published in 'Bahsi Dar Bāreye Marja'iyat Va Ruhāniyat' Tehrān 1962, which includes contributions by Āyatollah Taleqāni, Mehdi Bāzargān, Sayyed Mohammad Beheshti, and Sayyed Mohammad Hosseyn Tabātabā'i.

77 The leaders of the Freedom Movement were put on trial in 1964, and were imprisoned for between two to ten years.

in the 1960 and 1961 elections, and ruled by decree. On the 11th November 1961, the Shāh ordered the government to implement the land law of May 1960, against which Āyatollah Borujerdi had forsaken political abstemiousness to issue a fatwā opposing the law in its bill form, a year before he died. From January 1962, the revised land reform law was put into force successively in different provinces, opposed by both the National Front, and by the majority of the Ulema. In January 1963, the Shāh presented the first six points of what was later known as the 'White Revolution', followed by a referendum indicating on paper at least that the Shāh had the backing of the people. At the same time, the U.S. Embassy requested judicial privileges for U.S. military personnel in Iran, and the U.S. was prepared to back up the Pahlavi regime with large scale capital investment. The response of a section of the religious authorities to these developments was unequivocal;

"They have sold us; they have sold our independence ... Iran's greatness has gone ... If the religious authorities were influential, they would not allow this people (mellat) to be once the prisoner of the English and once the prisoner of America ... they would not allow Israeli goods to be sold in Iran without customs duty ... they would not allow any government to do what it wants ... If the religious authorities were influential, a group of members of parliament (vokalā) governing the fate of this country would not be tolerated ... Oh Iranian army, I give warning ... Oh politicians of Iran, I give warning ... Oh merchants of Iran, I give warning ... Oh Ulema of Iran, Oh leaders of Islam, I give warning ..." 78

78 Āyatollah Khomeyni, 4th Ābān 1343, in Qom, Āle Ahmad, Rowshanfekrān, op.cit. 2:84-90.

Āyatollah Khomeyni, preaching regularly against the government from the Feyziyyeh Madraseh in Qom, compared the Pahlavis to Yazid, the killer of Hosseyn.⁷⁹ On the 23rd March 1963, the Madraseh was attacked by paratroopers and security police and a number of students were killed. On the 3rd June, Khomeyni spoke out against the government and was arrested on the 4th June. He was released on 3rd August 1963, and stayed for two months in Tehrān, where he continued to denounce the regime for autocratic rule, violation of the constitution, granting capitulatory rights to U.S. military personnel, accepting U.S. loans, and for its relations with Israel. In October 1963, he was again arrested in Tehrān, and remained under house arrest until May. He was released again, but continued to oppose the government, until he was finally exiled on the 4th November 1964, first to Turkey, and then to Najaf, in Iraq. Meanwhile, disturbances within Iran spread to the University of Tehrān, Shirāz, Mashhad, Varāmin and Kāshān, and were finally suppressed with heavy loss of life.⁸⁰

Thus the environment of the early 1960's was one where on the one hand the theoretical background of an increased role for the religious authorities in the areas of social and political activity was being discussed, at the same time

79 Khomeyni's accusation is similar to the one made against the Qājārs by Sayyed Mohammad Tabātabā'i at the time of the constitutional movement, where he compared them to the Umayyads. N. Keddie, *Roots of the Ulemas' Power in Modern Iran*, op.cit. p.32.

80 H. Algar, *Oppositional role ...* op.cit.
 Abdol Hādi Hā'eri, op.cit.
 S. Akhavi, op.cit.
 W. Floor, op.cit.

as a practical example of political leadership was to be seen in the shape of an early insight into the intransigence of Āyatollah Khomeyni. Jalāl, then, in considering the question of a religious-radical alliance at this time was following a movement already in existence, and was contributing to it.

Thirdly, Jalāl's response to these external stimulæ reflected a dichotomy within himself which may have been mitigated in the process of resolving the divisions between the religious authorities and the intellectuals. The concept of a religious - radical alliance in the face of oppressive government and western domination was an attempt to reconcile conflicting tendencies not only amongst the Iranian opposition, but also in the country as a whole. Jalāl envisaged this division quite simply as between old and new, the traditional and the western. Unconcerned with shades of grey, it was a short step for Jalāl to represent the religious authorities as defenders of the Iranian, traditional values, and to dismiss the apparently western-oriented intellectual as champion of western values flooding into Iran. Yet with all the oversimplicity of Jalāl's conception of the problems, his awareness of the tension in Iran arising from the conflicting forces, was profound. It is, perhaps, no coincidence that he was concerned to resolve a conflict which not only created tension within the society in which he lived, but also was the cause of tension within himself.

The tension within Jalāl was between his religious family background and upbringing, and his adopted secular, westernised stance. His severely religious background and

the family pressure on him to become a ruhâni, to the extent that following in his father's footsteps, he travelled to Najaf as a Talabeh have already been described.⁸¹ Condemning such a background as raw, narrow and hypocritical,⁸² he paints the atmosphere of such a home in the semi-autobiographical story 'My Sister and the Spider' in sombre colours;

"At home I had to do what I was told. No questions asked and no hesitation. It's true that sometimes I complained, but that was mostly about my father's orders, which were difficult and given strictly ..." ⁸³

His father was authoritarian to the point of oppression;

"When he was in the house, you could tell he was there even when he wasn't ordering people about, had nobody with him and there was no light on in his room. It was as though the air was heavy. Every thing was quiet and in its place. Nothing could be touched". ⁸⁴

Unhappy in such an atmosphere, Jalâl broke with his father in 1944, having abandoned his studies in Najaf, translated an anti-religious pamphlet entitled 'Azâdârihâye Nâ Mashru',⁸⁵ and joined the Tudeh Party. Subsequently, his adopted environment was one of secular, intellectual, left wing politics - an entirely different kind of atmosphere - westernised and cosmopolitan, and frequently pretentious.

81 Chapter 1, p. 2 above.

82 See p. 103 above.

83 Âle Ahmad. Khwâharam Va 'Ankabut. Panj Dâstân. Ravâq 1356 (1977) p.53.

84 Ibid. p.64.

85 He states that the translation was published in 1943, and sold out immediately, but that he suspects that religious bazaaris bought it up and burnt it. Masalan Sharhe Ahvâlât, in Yek Châh Va Do Châleh, 1343 (1964) Ravâq. p.49.

Although abandoning party politics at the time of the coup of 1953, he remained an adopted rowshanfekr, moving still in politically active and literary circles until he died.

Thus within Jalāl there was a tension between the religious authority - the ruhāni by birth and upbringing, and the intellectual - the rowshanfekr by education and adoption.

To an extent then, it is suggested that Jalāl's pre-occupation with resolving the historical problem of the internal conflicts of Iranian society by means of a religious-radical alliance has a personal dimension to it which, if successfully resolved, would have lessened the turmoil and tension of Jalāl's spirit. Furthermore, there is a conjunction in the early 1960's of the trend towards a re-appraisal of the political and social role of the Ulema, and the practical example of political leadership given by Āyatollah Khomeyni, and Jalāl's personal experience, in the shape of a reconciliation with and the subsequent death of his father, and one or more meetings with Āyatollah Khomeyni.

Simin Dāneshvar has described the strained relations between Jalāl and his father during the period in which she knew him. She states that sometimes father and son would be speaking to each other and sometimes not. On their marriage, Jalāl's father retired to Qom in protest, and did not set foot in their house in Tajrish for several years. However, in 1959 or 1960, Jalāl's father fell ill, and eventually became paralysed, and a reconciliation was afforded between them.⁸⁶ Shortly after the reconciliation, Jalāl's father died.

86 Simin Dāneshvar, Showhare Man Jalāl, Andisheh Va Honar, op.cit. pp.347-348.

There are conflicting and confusing accounts of Jalāl's relations with Khomeyni, and the issue is surrounded by apochryphal stories. Two versions will be given here. Neither, unfortunately is particularly reliable.

According to one version,⁸⁷ the first meeting between Jalāl and Āyatollah Khomeyni occurred in 1962, on the death of Jalāl's father. Khomeyni arranged a memorial service (majlese khatm) for Jalāl's father, and the majles was attended by Jalāl and his brother Shams. Following the majles, Jalāl and Shams visited Khomeyni to thank him, a meeting at which the book *Gharb Zadegi*, recently published, was discussed, and which Khomeyni had seen and approved. The two men met on two subsequent occasions during the period that Khomeyni was in Tehrān immediately prior to his exile.⁸⁸ On the first occasion, Jalāl asked Khomeyni for some unspecified advice. On the second occasion, the two men shook hands, and Jalāl is reputed to have stated 'we will defeat the government if we continue holding hands'.

The second version⁸⁹ describes one meeting between the two men occurring in Esfand 1341 (February/March 1963) in Qom, at which Jalāl suggested an alliance between the intellectuals and the religious authorities against the Shāh, and Jalāl accepted the leadership of Āyatollah Khomeyni.

87 Shams Āle Ahmad.

88 This part of the account is reputed to have been related to Shams Āle Ahmad by Ehsān Shari'ati, the son of Dr. 'Ali Shari'ati.

89 Related by Parviz Dāriyush. I prefer the version related by Shams Āle Ahmad. I do not think that Parviz Dāriyush is a reliable witness, although he claimed to be present at the meeting. He appeared to enjoy the conspiritorial nature of his version, which makes more of the meeting than I think is justified.

Whichever, if either, of these versions is correct in detail, it is accepted by both versions that Jalāl met Khomeyni around the time of his father's death, and that the event had in retrospect a symbolic value in terms of an alliance between the religious authorities and the intellectual.⁹⁰

This conjunction of events in the early 1960's gives a personal dimension to a theoretical debate and a political trend towards a drawing together of a section of intellectuals and religious authorities. Jalāl, through the reconciliation with and subsequent death of his father, had at least one personal meeting with Khomeyni, the most outspoken leader of overt religious opposition to the Shāh's regime. The adopted intellectual was coming to terms with his religious past and envisaged a brave new way forward through reconciliation and unity. In touch with Āyatollah Tāleqāni of the Freedom Movement, he was, in subsequently writing *Dar Khedmat Va Khiyānate Rowshanfekrān*, concerning himself with a long standing problem of Iranian opposition, following the political movement of the time, and seeking to resolve on paper a dichotomy felt not only in the country at large, but also within himself.

The dichotomy within Jalāl between his religious upbringing and his adopted westernised-intellectual environment contributed towards his ambivalent view of religion. It has already been observed that he was not religious in an orthodox sense, yet not only at times did he display a

90 Khobrezādeh confirms this in *Keyhān*, op.cit.

nostalgic attachment to an ideal of religious purity found, he felt, in early Islam, but he also possessed a degree of spiritual awareness - an emotional appreciation of the feeling of religion which allowed him to look favourably on religion as a potentially helpful and progressive institution. These characteristics, in addition to his dictatorial manner in advising particularly the younger generation has led to accusations of 'àkhund bàzi' (lit; playing at being an Akhund) by some intellectuals,⁹¹ as well as the acceptance of Jalāl by some of the religious authorities as a pro-Islamic writer.⁹²

As it was, Jalāl attacked the reality of an out of date structure of religion and superstition. He did not attack belief itself, and showed much sympathy for the religious and customary beliefs of ordinary people.⁹³

There is little in his earlier writings which is seriously concerned with the content of religion. However, as

91 e.g. M. Kiyànush, *Àle Ahmad Dar Dāstānhāye Kutāhesh. Andisheh Va Honar* op.cit. pp.465-484. Jalāl was aware of this accusation. See *Goftogu Bā Jalāl Àle Ahmad* Ibid. p.398.

92 In the revolution of 1979, the religious aspects of Jalāl's writings were emphasised, the use of the term 'gharb zadegi' became widespread, and, it is said, the publication of some of his unpublished works was delayed on the grounds that they contain anti religious statements. I have not seen these works. Jalāl himself, however, was not above accusing others of àkhund bàzi. In *Rowshanfekrān*, he removes a few lines of Khomeyni's speech of 4th Abān 1343, stating "I have taken out 2 sentences here because they smelt of àkhund bàzi, concerning male teachers in girls schools and vice versa. It is these words which reduce the worth of the religious authorities as religious and social leaders". *Rowshanfekrān*. op.cit. 2:86.

93 M. Kiyànush has also observed this sympathy, yet felt that it was inconsistent with his irreligious stance. He is probably right. M. Kiyànush, op.cit.

a political radical and a socialist, he was naturally anti religious. Many of his early short stories attack the institutions of religion, and the illogicalities of certain religious practices, and the demands they make on the poor. It is, however, the structure of religion which is attacked, and not the religious feelings and beliefs of the people, for which he displays considerable sympathy. Superstition, those who exploit the poor in the name of religion, and some of the more demanding or insignificant religious practices are attacked. On the content of religion, he is silent; for belief, he shows sympathy.

In the story *Did o Bâz*, in the collection of the same name first published in 1946, the fundamental hypocrisy of some religious people is indicated, and their comfort and ease at a *noruz* ceremony is contrasted with the position of a blind beggar outside the door, ignored by everyone.⁹⁴ Elsewhere, the strictness of religious proscriptions during the month of *Ramadân*, especially for the poor, is criticised,⁹⁵ or criticism is made of those who exploit the simple belief of the people.⁹⁶ This somewhat morose style of social criticism is continued in the collection of stories '*Seh Târ*', first published in 1948, where religious bigotry, the curiousness of certain religious practices, and again the inhumanity of religious inflexibility are repetitive and sombre themes.⁹⁷

Yet, for the belief which the ordinary people have, *Jalâl* has considerable sympathy. Whether a strictly religious

94 *Âle Ahmad. Did o Bâz Did*, Amir Kabir, 5th ed. 1349 (1971) pp. 5-25.

95 *Eftâre bi Mowqe'*. Ibid. pp.55-69.

96 *Ma'reke*. Ibid. pp.135-151.

97 *Âle Ahmad. Seh Târ*. 3rd ed. Amir Kabir 1349. See *Seh Târ* pp.9-15, *Âftâbe Labe Bâm* pp.69-79, *Vasvâs*, pp.27-31.

belief, of belief in certain customs and traditions, Jalāl clearly feels an affinity, and displays equal warmth. In the mid 1940's, he wrote of the non Islamic noruz traditions;

"Yes, for an Iranian, sabzi polo with fish on the eve of noruz haft sin, shole zard and samanū, reshte polo, âshe reshte poshte pâ, and thousands of other customs which at first glance will be nothing but insignificant customs and superstitions with no roots, but in truth they are all the results and fruits of the special conditions of life of Iranians ..." 98

And in 1961, it is with equal warmth that he looks on religious customs and beliefs; he observes that 90% of the population;

"search in the sky for their current unfound good fortune, and in religion ... And good health to them. Sometimes they drink arak, but they wash their mouths out, and stand and pray, and they repent in the month of Ramadân, and even make sacrifices for Emânzâdeh Dâ'ud. And such a villager, for the sake of increasing his fortune, takes his family's hand and goes on a pilgrimage to Mashhad or at least to Qom". 99

There is, then a curious ambivalence to be found in Jalāl Âle Ahmad on the question of religion and religious feeling. A cynical and perhaps realistic view of the religious establishment and the social and pragmatic uses of religion in a country like Iran is countered by an almost sufi-like spiritual awareness, a nostalgic sympathy for the sensitivities of his less fortunate countrymen, and an

98 Did o Bâz, op.cit. Ziyârat, p.39.

99 Gharb Zadegi, op.cit. p.103.

emotional inclination towards a degree of mystery in life. It is an ambiguity which enables him to dismiss Darwin and the theory of evolution as;

"a theory ... a supposition, not even a view. And the other one is a story. Adam and Eve - and I, out of these two - that is between a supposition or a view and a story - I like the story. Because it is poetry ... you accept whichever one you want, you want to say that you're from a race of monkeys? O.K. But I'm from the race of Adam - who was born from the earth and God breathed into him so he got up and stood". 100

and encourages him to proclaim;

"Somewhere I wrote that the Emâm of the time for me is spread in the body of each individual. The Emâm of the time for whom we are all waiting ... is within each one of us". 101

The ambivalence of Jalâl's approach to religion can be seen clearly in his diary of the pilgrimage; *Khasi Dar Miqât*, first published in 1966. The pragmatic cynical Jalâl exists side by side with the emotional, spiritually aware humanist whose occasional perversity and undoubted conceit infuriated contemporaries yet created a following of uncritical admirers.

It was unusual for an intellectual to go on the Haj. Jalâl himself pointed out that;

100 Kârnâmeḥ Seh Sâleh, op.cit. p.187.

101 Ibid. p.166. This is possibly a reference to Gharb Zadegi, where he wrote; "and everyone awaits the Emâm of the time ... each one in their own way". Gharb Zadegi, op.cit. p.104.

"Intellectuals turn up their noses at these events, and gather up their skirts, saying 'the pilgrimage' is there such a shortage of places (that you must go there)?" 102

and indeed he wrote that his friends thought that he was up to some trick in going on the Haj.¹⁰³

His own reasons, however, are firmly pragmatic. He writes that he went partly to visit his brother's grave. His brother, the representative of Āyatollah Borujerdi in Medina, and spiritual leader of the Shii minority there, had died in 1951.¹⁰⁴ In addition, he writes;

".. I had come on this journey more with the intention of investigation. Like a head I put into every hole. To look, not in hope ... in any case - an experience as well ..." 105

and;

".. this is a custom, and every year one million people are called to one place and act in one manner. And in the end one has to go and see and witness what changes have occurred since the time of Nāser Khosro ..." 106

The pragmatic side of Jalāl caused him to look severely at the practicalities of the Pilgrimage, and to find them wanting. He heavily and frequently attacks the Saudi Arabian government for exploiting the pilgrims and providing

102 Khasi Dar Miqāt. op.cit. p.183.

103 Ibid. p.10.

104 Ibid. p.40. The Shii minority were usually occupied in Medina in care of the date trees.

105 Ibid. p.181.

106 Ibid. p.183. This is a reference to the Safarnāmeḥ of Nāser Khosro.

inadequate facilities in view of their huge number.¹⁰⁷ He criticises the commercialism of the Pilgrimage,¹⁰⁸ and frequently comments on the dirt, the crowds and the difficulties of travel. His suggested remedy to these ills is improved organisation under an international Islamic body to oversee the Haj.¹⁰⁹ Above all he is aware of the potentiality of the Haj as a symbol of the social power of Islam;

"Waiting, waiting and waiting - for the road to open, for things to quieten down, for the heat of the sun to pass, for water to come through the pipes, for the sewage to be removed, for food to arrive, and a thousand other 'fors'. On this journey, you continually go from one meeting time (miqât) to another. But 'time' is meaningless that it has no limit. The question is not that in the face of all this waiting ... no place remains for the spiritual world ... the question is that every year a million people partake in these customs, which if it was ordered, and had facilities, ... what power there would be". 110

Counterbalancing the pragmatic side revealed in the diary is the spiritual, or emotional awareness, which makes his views on religion appear contradictory and ambivalent - a sympathy for belief which leads him to write;

".. on this journey I was more in search of my brother - and all those other brothers - than in search of God, For God, for those that believe in him, - is everywhere". 111

107 This is a recurring theme throughout the diary, e.g. pp.118-120, where he contrasts the poor toilet facilities at 'Arafât with the existence of jet aeroplanes and chevrolats in the country. While it is difficult to disagree with him on this issue, on occasion he sounds like an outraged public health inspector.

108 Ibid. pp.166-168.

109 Ibid. pp.42, 124, 130, 148.

110 Ibid. p.124.

111 Ibid. p.183.

Spiritual awareness of the presence of God everywhere - for those who believe in him - is implicit in the title of the diary. Contrasting 'khasi dar miqât' (an insignificant particle at a time of meeting) with 'kasi dar me'yâd' (a specific person in a certain place), he writes;

"And I saw that it is only 'a particle' (khasi) and it has come to 'the time of meeting' (miqât), and not a person (kasi) and to 'a place of meeting' (me'yâd), and I saw that 'time' is eternal - that is the ocean of time. And 'the time of meeting' is at every moment, and every place. And only with yourself ..." 112

He describes the concept of a spiritual dimension to life as the presence of God everywhere, or a spiritual awareness of oneself. He emphasises this by referring to the story of Sheykh Abu Sa'id b. Abu'l Kheyr (357/967 - 440/1049), who advised a pilgrim on the way to Mecca (me'yâd) to donate his money and circumnambulate him rather than spend the money on the journey and circumnambulate the Ka'aba.¹¹³ Jalâl suggests that Abu Sa'id implied that all men are part of God, and thus God is present everywhere.

Ultimately, however, the ambiguity in Jalâl remains unresolved. The spiritual awareness does not come to terms with the cynical pragmatist; both sides exist concurrently, and the result is often a curious mixture of hard nosed reality offset by a wistful idealism. The contrast of his

112 Ibid. pp.84-85.

113 Ibid. p.85. The story is related in the spiritual biography of Abu Sa'id written by his great, great grandson Mohammad Ibne Monavvar, *Asrâr al tawhid fi maqâmat al Sheykh Abu Sa'id*. Ed. Z. Safâ, Tehrân 1953.

experience of the mas'â and the tavâf is illuminating, indicating that even his spiritual awareness is tempered by a sense of earthly order.

The sa'y he finds abhorrent. He cannot stand the nakedness of the individual spiritual experience, or the anarchy of individuality. He complains of the chaotic crush of people, all apparently terrified and fleeing from something;

"there is no object in it. And in this coming and going, that which troubles you is the continual confrontation with eyes". 114

He finds it unbearable, and flees from the mas'â in tears,¹¹⁵ having completed only two lengths.

The tavâf, on the other hand, is a rewarding experience. Symbolising the equality and unity of Mankind¹¹⁶ in contrast to the anarchy of the mas'â, he writes;

"In the tavâf around the house (the ka'aba), you go shoulder to shoulder with others in one direction. You go round one thing ... that is, it has an object and an order. And you are a particle of dust around a centre. Then you are connected ... and not released. And more important than this - there are no confrontations. Shoulder to shoulder with others, not face to face". 117

And, ambiguous to the end, he changes his mind and adds that Abu Sa'id, after all, made a mistake of not visiting Mecca

114 Ibid. p.92.

115 Ibid. p.92.

116 Ibid. p.150.

117 Ibid. p.92.

and experiencing the mas'â and the tavâf.¹¹⁸

The extension of Jalâl's political ideas beyond the analysis contained in the work *Gharb Zadegi*, then, was exclusively concerned with reconciling the opposites found within Iranian society, with dissipating the tension, and suggesting a way in which the conflicting tendencies could be reconciled. The religious authorities and the intellectual represented the extremes of Iranian society - the traditional and the modern - and an alliance between the two would solve the problem. Jalâl formulated this idea within the context of a movement towards the reappraisal of the political role of religion current in the 1950's and the early 1960's, and was further encouraged by the example of practical political leadership given by Āyatollah Khomeyni, or, as Jalâl stated himself, he was "stirred by ... the 15th Khordād 1342".¹¹⁹ A conjunction of these political events and personal experience in the shape of a reconciliation with his father, followed by the death of his father, linked a resolution of a personal tension to the political events in the country as a whole. The result was the theoretically dubious *Dar Khedmat Va Khiyānate Rowshanfekrān*, a book where the simplicity of view and historical perspective is in direct contrast to the complexity and ambiguity of Jalâl's true approach to the problems of religion, the religious authorities and the Iranian Intellectual.

118 Ibid. p.92.

119 p. 97 above, and *Rowshanfekrān*, op.cit. 1:16.

CHAPTER 4

ĀLE AHMAD AND THE ROLE OF THE WRITER AS A POLITICAL ACTIVIST

It has been argued that in the key works of Gharb Zadegi and *Dar Khedmat Va Khiyānate Rowshanfekrān*, Āle Ahmad has displayed a preoccupation with the preservation of Iranian cultural values in the face of western cultural values accompanying modernisation. Consequently, he was opposed to the Pahlavi regime, on the one hand as disrupters of an Iranian cultural integrity by the imposition of 'pseudo modernist' reforms supported by the major western powers, and on the other hand as governing autocratically and unjustly. In the course of a search for a remedy to this situation Āle Ahmad castigated not only those of his intellectual predecessors and contemporaries who did not attempt to stand in the way of such cultural desecration and political repression, but also those of the religious authorities who similarly avoided their responsibility, and had recourse to superstition, fanaticism and a retraction into their own limited world. In an attempt to instill a sense of commitment and responsibility, Āle Ahmad suggested an alliance of Iranian intellectuals and the religious authorities.

It has been observed that these ideas were not original. Within the context of Iranian political opposition, they have been suggested and discussed many times in the course of the previous hundred years. In addition, it has been suggested that Āle Ahmad's presentation of the arguments is often con-

tradictory, weak and over simplified, adding a degree of controversy to both himself and the issues which is perhaps undeserved.

However, it would do less than justice to the man to dismiss him merely because he collated a series of current ideas and failed to present them in a sufficiently westernised academic manner.

Jalâl was, above all, a communicator. The virtue of his work lies in the communication of relevant observations of contemporary Iranian society in a readily understandable form. His emotional grasp of the effect of contemporary developments on Iranian society was unsurpassed, and combined with a simple and direct style of writing and a strong sense of personal integrity, his work cuts like a cold wind through the complacency of the contemporary Iranian intellectual and establishment environment.

For Jalâl, writing was a form of social and political activity. The writer must be committed; he must be engaged in the social and political movements of the day;

".. a writer is responsible. He is 'engagé' ... is it not that silence is a sign of consent?" 1

He dismissed those who stepped to one side. In 1953, he contrasted the political magazine 'Elm o Zendegi' with the purely literary and artistic magazines of the time, describing them as merely an amusement;

1 Goftogu Bâ Jalâl Âle Ahmad. Andisheh Va Honar 5th period No.4. p.395.

"Watching was always a pastime. The person who watches, whether he who killed time watching Gladiators in the arenas of ancient Rome, or he who today ... steps aside and criticises others, does not care what happens to the makers of events".

and he contrasts this opting out with the workers of 'Elm o Zendegi', who are involved in events, and are committed to producing

"A shout which ... is an allusion of Freedom". 2

By 1958, he was of the opinion that

"In this area, art is a matter of Jehād. 3 Jehād against illiteracy, against rubbish, against westernisation, against imitation, against fraud, against opportunism, against complacency". 4

and five years later, reaffirmed that the duty of the writer was to awaken the individual; in other words for the art of the writer to act as a social and political catalyst.⁵ By 1964, he was advocating a literary commitment which excused the writer from limiting himself to his specialist subject. In the particular circumstances of Iran, he feared that a call for specialisation in a subject before expressing an opinion on it was too often an excuse for remaining silent in the face of political controversy,⁶ and he stated;

2 Chand Kalameh Az Miyāne Gowd, 'Elm o Zendegi. Noruz 1332, (1953) pp.3-4.

3 Holy war.

4 Moqademe'i Keh Dar Khore Qadre Bolande Shā'er Nabud. Arzyābiye Shetābzadeh. Amir Kabir 1357 (1978). p.13.

5 Faryādi Az Sare Chāh. Introduction to Seh Maqāleye Digar, dated 3 Tir 1342/June 1963 Ravāq. 3rd ed. Tehrān n.d. p.13.

6 Sarkeye 'Naqd' Yā Halvāye Tārikh. Arzyābiye Shetābzadeh. op.cit. p.6.

"In every circumstance when I can give myself permission to express an opinion, I write an article". 7

because

"We write, we speak, in order to whip the reader". 8

Jalāl was influenced from two directions concerning writing as a social and political activity, against the background of literary developments of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. At that time it was felt that literature had a wider role to play in society. Through the works of Ākhundzādeh,⁹ Zeyn ol'Ābedin Marāghe'i,¹⁰ Dehkhodā¹¹ and Jemālzādeh,¹² literature started to move beyond the well established moulds of popular rural and urban folk tales and romances on the one hand, and the rigidity of classical forms of poetry and prose on the other.¹³

However, despite the fact that the main developments brought about by these writers concerned both subject matter and language, it was not until the socialist realism philosophy of the Tudeh Party emerged as the fashionable style of literary activity in the 1940's that the idea of a political and social role of the writer gained general acceptance.

The term 'socialist realism' became widely accepted following the First Congress of the Soviet Writers' Union.

7 Goftogu. Andisheh Va Honar, op.cit. p.395.

8 Ibid. p.401.

9 In particular see the preface to Ākhundzādeh's plays, translated by Mirzā Ja'far Qarājedāghi, 1874.

10 Siyāhatnāme-ye Ebrāhim Beg.

11 The newspaper Sur Esrāfil.

12 Yeki Bud, Yeki Nabud. Kāviyāni Press. 1921.

13 E.G. Browne. Press and Poetry of Modern Persia. C.U.P. 1914.

Ibid. A Literary History of Persia. Vol.IV Modern Times. C.U.P. 1930.

Y. Āryānpur; Az Sabā Tā Nimā. 2 Vols. Tehrān 1351 (1972) 2nd ed.

Descended from classical realism, the perspective of socialist realism was the struggle for socialism, based on a concrete socialist awareness of the development, structure and goal of society. In the view of the Soviet Writers' Union, therefore, any accurate (and thus socialist) account of reality was a contribution to the Marxist critique of capitalism.¹⁴

It has been pointed out that the prevalence of this form of literary activity in the Iranian context can be seen from the discussions held at the First Writers' Congress of Iran in June/July 1946 in Tehrân where it was generally felt that literature should be relevant to the people.¹⁵ Khânlari admitted that writers were social pioneers with a historical responsibility,¹⁶ but it was Bozorge Alavi who stated the case for political involvement of the writer with the greatest force;

"Writers are leaders of the people ... The poet and the writer are leaders of society, and must describe what the nation unknowingly feels yet cannot explain, and present it to society".¹⁷

Jalâl, while a member of the Tudeh Party, was influenced by this approach.¹⁸ The collection of stories *Az Ranji Keh*

14 G. Lukacs. *The Meaning of Contemporary Realism*. Merlin 1969.

15 Dr. A.R. Navâbpur. *A Study of Recent Persian Prose Fiction with Special Reference to the Social Background*. Ph.D. Thesis Durham University, 1981 p.184ff.

16 Nakhostin Kongreye Nevisandegâne Irân. *Tir Mâh* 1325 (1946). Tehrân. pp.174-175.

17 Ibid. pp.183-184. The contrast between Khânlari's useful but lengthy and flowery speech and Alavi's blunt and uncompromising statement is interesting. One feels that Alavi, as a hard line Tude'i, had little patience with the intellectual elaborations of a man like Khânlari.

18 This style of writing was discussed, e.g. in *Mardome Mâhâneh*, the Tudeh Party monthly to which Jalâl contributed. See A.A. Zhadonov, *Mas'uliyate Nevisandegâne Showravi*. *Mordâd* 1326, (July/August 1947), pp. 23-34. E. Tabari, *Dar Bâreye Enteqâd Va Mâhiyate Honar Va Zibâyeh Honar*. *Shahrivar* 1326 (Aug/Sept; 1947). pp.11-35.

Mibarim, published by the Tudeh Party publishing house Sho'levar when Jalāl was in charge in 1947 are written according to the dictates of the prevalent style of socialist realism. The stories concern the events and sufferings experienced by communists or those suspected of being such during the suppression following the collapse of the Āzerbaijān Democratic Republic in 1946. However, this style of writing was rejected forcefully by Jalāl as he abandoned the Tudeh Party, and he subsequently looked on that collection of stories with embarrassment.¹⁹

The second influence on Jalāl pushed him towards similar conclusions, but in an individualist manner, and not as a writer in the service of a political party. In October 1945, the first issue of Sartre's periodical *Les Temps Modernes* appeared. The first issue contained Sartre's manifesto 'Writing for one's Age', which was concerned above all with the integrity of the writer. He followed this with a collection of four articles grouped under the title 'What is Literature?', published in 1948.²⁰

In 'Writing for one's Age' and 'What is Literature?', Sartre advocated a committed role for the writer, a utilitarian use of prose, and stated that the writer is primarily a mediator, whose function is to 'call a spade a spade'.²¹

19 Goftugo. *Andisheh Va Honar*. op.cit. p.403. He states that he would not allow the collection to be reprinted. It was not reprinted until after his death. Also see Masalan Sharhe Ahvālāt, in Āle Ahmad, *Yek Chāh Va Do Chāleh*, Ravāq. 1st ed. nd.

20 J.P. Sartre. 'What is Literature?' Introduction by D. Cate. Methuen 1978. p.vii, and p.232ff. 'Writing for one's Age' first appeared in the review *Valeurs* (No's.7-8), published in Alexandria. The idea of the responsibility of the writer was not new in Europe, having previously been discussed by inter alia Zola, Tolstoy and Andre Malraux.

21 J.P. Sartre, 'What is Literature?'. op.cit. p.210.

Sartre argued that the book should be a weapon in the struggle which men wage against evil, and that through his work, a writer should arouse anger, discomfort, shame, hatred and love. Thus the prose writer, in contrast to the poet, painter and musician who deals in abstracts, employs through his use of language, a subjectivity which must be used towards the awareness and attainment of freedom.²²

Jalāl took the pragmatic aspect of Sartre's philosophical reasoning; the writer must be committed to the political and social struggle. *Les Temps Modernes* was a major source of influence and information for Jalāl, and it was his familiarity with French literature essentially through Sartre's magazine which enabled him to say in one of his more enthusiastic moods that nothing striking occurred in contemporary French literature of which he was unaware.²³

Jalāl's concept of the commitment of the writer; of writing as a form of political action, should be understood against the background of an increasingly repressive political environment in the years following the coup of 1953. The years following the coup brought a change in the intellectual atmosphere, the gradual suppression of overt political activity by the government and increasing pressure on a diminishing number of intellectuals who were prepared to continue political and

22 See I. Murdoch. Sartre. Bowes 1953; A.C. Danto. Sartre. Fontana 1975. M. Warnock, The Philosophy of Sartre. Hutchinson 1965.

23 Goftugo. Andisheh Va Honar. op.cit. p.390. Although the influence of Sartre's magazine can be seen on Jalāl from the late 1940's, it was not until the early 1960's that the full weight of Sartre's ideas of 'engagement' was felt, following a trip to Paris, which he said was a time of fresh ideas, books and discussions. Āle Ahmad, Sangi Bar Guri. Ravāq 1981. p.74.

artistic activity critical of the Government.²⁴ Following the formation of SÄVÄK in 1957, and the increase of censorship and the suppression of dissident opinions accompanying the White Revolution, this small group of urban intellectuals were clear targets for Government pressure and threats.

Censorship naturally reflected the regime's increasing reluctance to allow the free expression of opinion. Although active in the early 1960's, censorship was not particularly effective, it has been suggested, because the censors did not understand the language used by writers.²⁵ However, as the censors became more aware of the particular forms of expression of dissident opinion,²⁶ direct censorship increased, accompanied by a form of 'self censorship' entailing a concentration on purely literary subjects, and the avoidance of the controversial.²⁷ From 1966, literary freedom was further restricted, as in that year the Government insisted that all books, after printing and before publishing, should be presented to the censor office of the Ministry of Culture for inspection. By this means, publishers were faced with the possibility of financial loss if, having been printed, a work was then banned by the censor before publication. Thus the practice of self censorship became more widely used.

24 While there were periods following the 1953 coup when political and artistic opinions were expressed relatively openly, (for instance at the time of the liberalisation of 1961-62), nonetheless the overall trend was one of steadily increasing pressure.

25 R. Baràheni, Zelollah. Enteshàrâte Abjad. 1354 (1975) N.Y.U.S.A. p.9.

26 It has been noted that the use of certain words as symbols of opposition by writers was common - for instance winter, night, tulip, peony, forest, red rose. Dah Shab, Kànune Nevisandegàn, Tehràn 1357/1978. Dr. A.R. Navàbpur, op.cit. p.231. To what extent these words were used in the 1960's is unclear. 'Forest', for example, only became used following the events in Siyàhkal on 8th February 1971.

27 R. Baràheni, op.cit. p.11.

During the course of development of this atmosphere, committed literary activity and the assumption of responsibility by writers and artists, increasingly became the actions of a diminishing number of brave men and women.²⁸ Jalāl was in the mainstream of this activity. His writings reflect both his commitment and his personal integrity. His commitment and his personal integrity is reflected not only in his writings, but also in his involvement in the foundation of the short lived magazine *Keyhān Māh*, and the formation of the Writers' Organisation (*Kānune Nevisandegān*).

Barāheni has pointed out that with the increasing effect of censorship and other more direct restrictions on the liberty of the dissident individual, a general debate arose amongst intellectuals concerning the 'responsibility' of the writer.²⁹ During the period of relative ineffectiveness of the censor, the debate was reflected in a flourishing of 'responsible' magazines, such as *Ketābe Haftēh*, *Ārash*, *Enteqāde Ketāb*, and *Jahāne Now* under Barāheni himself,³⁰ as well as provincial 'jongs',³¹ in cities such as Mashhad, Tabriz, Isfahan and Shiraz.

*Keyhān Māh*³² was an early example of the committed, responsible magazines of the early 1960's. Founded in the summer of 1962, at a time when established literary magazines had become associated with or had been 'bought' by specific political

28 Jalāl himself pointed this out. *Āle Ahmad*, *Dar Khedmat Va Khiyānate Rowshanfekrān*, op.cit. 1:81, and see above chapter 3 p. 107.

29 R. Barāheni, op.cit. pp.8-9.

30 Where he was assisted by Jalāl and Gholām Hosseyn Sā'edi.

31 Literary magazine.

32 This magazine is sometimes called *Ketābe Māh*. In fact the first issue (nd.) is called *Ketābe Māh*, whereas the second and final published issue is called *Keyhāne Māh*. 1st period, No.2. *Shahrivar* 1341.

cliques,³³ Jalāl, in conjunction with Simin Dāneshvar, Parviz Dāriyush and Shams Āle Ahmad, intended to produce an independent, literary and committed magazine. Keyhān Māh claimed no political affiliation, and stated that all writers were responsible for their own views. The lead article of the first issue affirms the magazine's independent stance, and reflects Jalāl's commitment to a contemporary, Iranian involvement, and the distaste with which he viewed the existing intellectual environment;

"First to us who agreed to produce this magazine, not with the intention of filling pages, nor for the sake of building a mausoleum or an ivory tower, nor making friends, nor constructing a ladder of this and that, nor creating masters nor disciples ... We are opening a door to the east. To Mother East; to Asia which will arise ... The purpose of this magazine is to attend to true Iranian and eastern affairs".³⁴

Jalāl viewed Keyhān Māh as a manifestation of the political activity of the writer, as "a whip to crack", one which should be cracked so hard that "the weal remains for years".³⁵

The formation of the Writers' Organisation is equally an example of Jalāl's 'engagement'. The Organisation arose out of the changes of the censorship regulations in 1966.³⁶ Jalāl, Ahmad Shāmlu, Darvish Shari'at, Gholām Hosseyn Sā'edi, Sirus Tāhbāz, Yadollah Ro'yā'i and Rezā Barāheni visited the Prime

33 Sokhan, edited by Khānleri, was associated with Prime Minister Asadollah 'Alam; Kāvesh, edited by Hoveydā, (the future Prime Minister) was associated with 'Alam's replacement Hasan 'Ali Mansur.

34 Hemmati Badraqeye Rāh Kon. Ketābe Māh No.1. pp.3-4.

35 Āle Ahmad, Yek Chāh Va Do Chāleh, op.cit. p.37. and Chapter 1 above p. 35.

36 See p. 142 above.

Minister Hoveydâ in order to protest against censorship. Although the protest was ineffective, it resulted in the formation of the Writers' Organisation on the 22nd Farvardin 1347/April 1968. Initially meetings were held in Jalâl's house, or in that of Behâzin or Bahrâm Beyzâ'i. The Organisation demanded inter alia the defence of freedom of expression in reliance on the Constitution. After Jalâl's death in 1969, the Organisation continued into the early seventies, until increasing Government pressure led to the arrest of several members, and the suspension of its activities.³⁷

Jalâl's philosophy of the commitment of the writer which he displayed in a practical form in his involvement in Keyhân Mâh and the Writers' Organisation, is also reflected in his articles. With the exception of the eulogies of Tudeh Party leaders published in Mardom when Jalâl was in his early 20's,³⁸ the majority of his articles were published in 'Elm o Zendegi', and subsequently reprinted in book form.³⁹ They cover a wide range of subjects, on some of which in an academic sense Jalâl was singularly unqualified to write, except, as he observed himself;

"I have ears, I have eyes ..."⁴⁰

and silence, he believed was consent to a structure of political

37 Barâheni, op.cit. pp.22-28. A.R. Navâbpur, op.cit. pp.225-6. Dah Shab, op.cit. pp.9-10, and pp.117-119. And see R. Barâheni The Crowned Cannibals Vintage 1977, pp.111ff., which contains the same information as Zelollah.

38 see Bibliography.

39 see Bibliography.

40 Goftogu. Andisheh Va Honar, op.cit. p.395.

and cultural values with which he could not agree.

Consequently, whether writing literary criticism, on painting, music, architecture, book reviews or on special Iranian customs⁴¹ the relevance of these articles is less their ability to transmit a deep knowledge of a particular subject, and more a demand for a committed, responsible and Iranian way of life. His criterion was, did the poem, painting or play stand up and criticise? Did it question, comment and accuse, or was it socially and politically irrelevant - a mere pastime? Thus in a review of a book which he saw as committed literature, he observed that modern Persian poetry should be liberated from its formal settings, and be brought into the contemporary world, using colloquial language and including criticisms of contemporary society.⁴² He similarly accused modern Iranian painters of making;

"Fools of people with your dumb tongues and these deceiving colours which have nothing behind them". 43

However, in his articles on Nimā Yushij, he displays a depth of understanding found rarely in his articles. The unorthodox poetry of Nimā did not find acceptance amongst the established literary milieu of the 1940's and 1950's. Jalāl had first seen him at the Writers' Congress in 1946, and subsequently met him in the offices of the Tudeh Party monthly Mardom. From 1947, Jalāl and Ahmad Shāmlu visited Nimā on a regular basis, and in 1953 Jalāl moved to Tajrish and became a next door neighbour

41 Full list see Bibliography.

42 Ketābi Dar Siyāsāt Va Daftare She'ri Dar Zamm. Arzyābiye Shetābzadeh, op.cit. p.29.

43 Beh Mohandes Va Barāye Divār. Ibid. p.150.

of Nimā. Jalāl observed in 1964 that he wrote on Nimā in order to make the literary world take him seriously,⁴⁴ and the series of articles which comprise the 'Defence of Nimā' display a desire to create an audience for a type of poetry relevant to contemporary society, in addition to a deep understanding of the poetry itself.⁴⁵

In his translations, Jalāl shows a similar preoccupation with the engagement of the writer, and his responsibility as an agent of political and social change. 'Malraux's phrase 'tragic humanist' is appropriate in relation to Jalāl, who propagated humanist values in the face of the depersonalisation of modern man and ultimately the destruction if not of the world, then at least an Iranian cultural entity. His translations were warnings of western decadence; of fascism; of the inevitable destruction of the machine struck society.⁴⁶ Thus he translated from those writers who influenced him towards a humanist, individualist and pessimistic view of modern society; Sartre, Camus, Gide - defenders of freedom and individuality and champions of individual responsibility;

44 Goftogu, Andisheh Va Honar, op.cit. p.397.

45 Afsāneye Nimā Yushij, Irāne Mā. Tir-Azar, 1329 (1950).
Moshkele Nimā, 'Elm o Zendegi No.5. 1331 (1952).
Nāmeye Āle Ahmad Khetāb Beh Nimā. Niruye Sevvom Haftegi 29 Khordād 1332 (1953).
Pāsekhe Nimā Beh Āle Ahmad. Jaras. 26 Tir 1332 (1953).
Mofāvezeye Mowlānā 'Aqil Va Janābe Doktor Ālāmad. Andisheh Va Honar No.9. Farvardin 1339 (1960).
Pire Mard Chashme Mā Bud. Ārash No.2. 1340 (1961).
Nimā Digar She'r Nakhwāhad Goft. Dey 1338 (1960) in Arzyābiye Shetābzadeh. op.cit. pp.31-36.

46 See Āle Ahmad; Gharb Zadegi. Ravāq, 2nd ed. n.d. p.195ff. It should, however, be noted that his early translations were also accomplished with the intention of learning French, during the period of silence following the Enshe'āb. Āle Ahmad, Masalan Sharhe Ahvālāt, in Yek Chāh Va Do Chāleh, op.cit. p.50.

Yunger and Ionesco, nihilism and the Theatre of the Absurd - pessimistic, with a sense of waste and futility in the face of the destruction of humanity.⁴⁷ All were warnings. Jalâl wrote that he looked at the play *Rhinoceros* by Ionesco in the same way that he viewed Camus, and he refers to the *Plague*, Huxley's *Brave New World*, Eliot's *The Wasteland* and Ionesco's *Rhinoceros* as 'warnings of the end of the world' - a world where man has turned from his origins through his association with machines.⁴⁸

Jalâl showed equal commitment and concern for personal integrity in his fictional works. If in his non fiction, he was a social and political commentator, in his fiction he combined that role with that of the artist, and was able to communicate his criticisms and views in a more subtle, indirect yet effective manner.

The piece 'Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Scribes' is his manifesto of the commitment and personal integrity of the writer, presented in a fictional form. Couched in a religious format, Jalâl considered it to be his will, published before he went on the Haj.⁴⁹

'The Epistle of Paul the Apostle' (Resâleye Pulus Rasul) was first published in the magazine *Mehregân*,⁵⁰ and was sub-

47 See Bibliography for a full list of Jalâl's translations. For the role of the various writers in general, see L. Braun, *Witness of Decline*, Albert Camus. AUP 1974. G. Bree, *Camus and Sartre*. Calder and Boyers 1974. F.H. Willhoite, *Beyond Nihilism*, Louisiana State Univ. Press, 1968. G.D. Painter, *Andre Gide*, Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1968. W. Fowlie, *Andre Gide, his life and Art*, MacMillan, NY. 1965. R.N. Coe, *Ionesco*. Methuen 1971.

48 Âle Ahmad, *Introduction to Karkadan*. 1345, p.7. See Chapter 1 above pp.30-33.

49 Goftogu. *Andisheh Va Honar*, op.cit. p.398.

50 3rd period, No.4. pp.3-4.

sequently reprinted as the introduction to the 2nd edition of the collection of stories entitled Zane Ziyādi. The first edition of the collection⁵¹ included an introduction by Khānleri, which Jalāl felt was unsatisfactory, and subsequently withdrew.⁵² 'The Epistle of Paul the Apostle' thus replaced Khānleri's original introduction.

In addition to being a clear statement of and demand for integrity and responsibility of the writer, the Epistle is an amusing parody of the style of writing of the New Testament, a pastiche of theological scholarship, a lyrical and powerful piece of prose writing, and at the same time a cynical observation of the corruption of those who make their living from wielding the pen.

In the brief introduction, Jalāl claims that the Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Scribes was found in the margins of pages one to seven of a handwritten copy of the Epistle of St. Barnabus, in the Holy Syriac language, and thus makes up the fourteenth Epistle of Paul.⁵³ The Epistle was discovered by himself in conjunction with a Nestorian priest of his

51 Published at the personal expense of Isā Esmā'ilzādeh.

52 Khānleri was, for Jalāl, an example of an opportunist writer and intellectual who lacked both responsibility and integrity. See Moqadame'i Keh Dar Khore Qadre Bolande Shā'er Nabud. op.cit. and 'notes for the second edition' of Zane Ziyādi, dated 15 Dey 1342 (January 1964).

53 It is usually held that there are 13 Epistles of Paul. The customary 14th - to the Hebrews - is only attributed to Paul, and, as Jalāl quite correctly points out, is also often attributed to Barnabus. However, despite the disputed authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews (the erstwhile 14th Pauline Epistle) which some authorities attribute to an anonymous hellenistic Jew, (Readers Bible, London 1951 New Testament pp.204 and 297), there is no doubt that the authorship of the Epistle of Paul to the Scribes may correctly be attributed to Jalāl.

'acquaintance, and he suggests that it has hitherto remained unknown due to the controversy surrounding the Epistle to the Hebrews, and to whom it should be attributed. With the assistance of the Nestorian priest, the Epistle was translated from Syriac into Persian, and it was with temerity that Jalâl presented the translation before the judgement of scholars.

The parody itself, however, is not in fact of any of the Pauline (or other) Epistles, but is of the opening chapter of the Gospel according to John. Opening in the manner of a Pauline Epistle;

".. to the Scribes, to the Writers, to the Copiers, to the Secretaries, to the Researchers, to the Writers of the Scrolls, to the Eulogists, to the Panygyrists (Orjuzekhwânân), to the Historians, to the Translators, to the Followers of New Styles and Old Styles ..." 54

it continues with a direct translation from the Gospel of St. John;

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him, and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him was life, and life was the light of man". 55

Then, however, Jalâl's Epistle diverges from the Gospel according to John, and catalogues the corruption of the Word at the hands of men. The Word is taken over by 'civilisation' - by religion and government equally, and led to oppression;

54 Resâle-ye Pulus Rasul Beh Kâtebin, Chapter 1 vs.4. Zane Ziyâdi, 6th ed. Ravâq, 1357 (1978) p.14.

55 Ibid. p.14. and Readers Bible, op.cit. New Testament p.124.

- "9. But then the Child of Man knew the Word and wrote it and caused it to be written, and conquered the earth and flourished, and found favour, and there was the Word and there was flourishing.
 10. And the Word became the Word and there was the Scribe, and religious laws were made.
 11. And there was the Word and laws were made, and the Word came in books and civil law. (daftar va divân).
 12. There was the Word and the Word was in books and there was a tribunal, and the foundation of imprisonment and prison". 56

The Son of Man, continues the Epistle, was crucified, repurifying the Word, which then spread throughout the world. Those who made a profession from the pen multiplied, but the Eulogists took over the Word, and supported the Governors, digging a moat around the courts of the Governors. Oppression once again occurred;

- "25. There was the blood of the young, and there was the blood of the old, and each one was fresh, and they turned mills with it". 57

and

- "28. There were corpses on the earth and blood was clotted, and there were vultures, and also Historians". 58

Thus once again the profession of those concerned with the Word lost integrity, and resorted to opportunism.

The Scribe with integrity, (with the Word in his heart) states the Epistle, was to be found imprisoned in stocks and chains in the dark west,⁵⁹ but the sun shining from the east

56 Resâleye Pulus Rasul. op.cit. p.14.

57 Ibid. p.15.

58 Ibid. p.15.

59 Ibid. Chapter 2 vs.2-10. This is perhaps a reference to the aspect of Fardid's concept of Gharb Zadegi which meant that the west represented evil and darkness. See Chapter 2, p. 76 above.

warmed him, gave him strength, and through the Son of Man's discovery of the tree of knowledge, the Word was liberated. However, the Word was then divided between the east and the west, and although the Word in the east had unity, it was old, whereas in the west, having emerged from the Dark Ages, it was fresh, and like the colonialist west "... arose from the darkness of the earth and spread".⁶⁰ Thus the Word was divided, and the Scribes and others took sides.

Having described the corruption of the Word at the hands of those professionally concerned with it, and the religious and civil authorities, the author of the Epistle continues to consider who is the writer with integrity and responsibility, who is prepared to martyr himself;

"1. So who is the Scribe and who is the Poet, and who is the Compiler (Gerdāvarandeh), and who is he that writes the Word?

2. Other than inheritors of he who died in the heart of the prison and did not deny the Word?" 61

And each Scribe will find his reward in proportion to how he has maintained his integrity, and so joined in the eternity of the Word. Yet the Word is not God, to be worshipped, but is Truth;

"14. And know that the Kingdom of Heaven is not in the Word but is in love.

15. Is not in books, but is in the heart.

16. Is not in the Scrolls, but is in the cry of the birds.

17. Look that you write the Word on that tablet which is eternal.

19. ... on the tablets of the heart which is not of stone but is of flesh and blood". 62

60 Ibid. Chapter 2 vs.27, p.18.

61 Ibid. Chapter 3 p.18.

62 Ibid. Chapter 3 p.19.

He warns against those who try to obtain something from the Scribes;

"24. Books are varied, and Scribes also, but the Word is the same.

25. From you everyone wants something - one a book, one poetry, one a prayer, one an omen, one abuse, one sorcery and one an antidote to sorcery.

26. Do not look at the one who wants something from you, look at that which your heart wants from you". 63

And he advocates a personal integrity;

"1. Let your Word be like a flower, O Scribe, spreading scent when it blossoms, attracting people, and when it dies, 100 seeds remain and spread.

13. Beware lest you sell the Word for the sake of bread, and bring the spirit into service of the body. Do not become the slave of man for any price, not even the treasures of Chroesus.

15. If you sell, sell your strength. The pen, never.

16. Even (sell) your body, never the Word". 64

and acknowledges through personal integrity, the existence of a universal truth;

"20. Is it not that Truth is one everywhere, and in what ever language they write?" 65

Thus the scribe has a political and social responsibility;

"26. O Scribe give good news to beauty and goodness and brotherhood and peace.

27. Comfort the mourners in your Word, support the weak, and be a sword against the oppressors.

28. In your Word, be the angel of wealth to the poor, and the demon of scarcity and nothingness to the rich". 66

63 Ibid. Chapter 3, p.19.

64 Ibid. Chapter 4, pp.20-21.

65 Ibid. Chapter 4, p.21.

66 Ibid. Chapter 4, p.22.

Jalāl considered Resāleye Pulus Rasul to be his will. It was a bequest to the future generation of Iranian intellectuals from a man who felt his own generation to be barren; to have given up resisting. The bequest included a cynical observation of the world Jalāl saw around him, a call for a committed and personal integrity, and a belief in the simple virtues of truth and honesty. It was a straightforward message, one which, in the increasingly repressive political climate of the 1950's and 1960's, Jalāl stridently repeated - a formidable voice in a relative wilderness.

This moral force of commitment and personal integrity of the individual, when combined with his political view of Iranian cultural values threatened by indiscriminate westernisation exercised through imperialist domination of Iran, and encouraged by the vested interests of the Pahlavi regime, colours his major fiction. As a writer and a political activist, Jalāl could not remain silent. He had to express his opinions, to comment, and to criticise his environment. And it is through his longer fiction, through allegory and through realism, that his skill as a commentator and a communicator of his views, is best revealed. 'The Letter N and the Pen', (Nun Va'l Qalam), 'The Headmaster' (Modire Madraseh), and 'The Cursing of the Land' (Nefrine Zamin) comprise his major fictional works, and display the art of the political activist.

CHAPTER 5

RESISTANCE AND ALLEGORY

As a politically committed writer in a restrictive political environment, Jalāl on occasion resorted to the use of allegory in his fiction. The novels 'The Tale of the Beehives' and 'The Letter N and the Pen' both reflect a traditional mould of story telling containing allegories of particular problems of contemporary Iranian society.

In both classical and modern Persian literature there is a tradition of the use of *tamsil* (allegory), *kenāyeh* (allusion), and *esta'āreh* (simile). As these techniques frequently overlap in Persian literature, these terms will be used here in a loose sense of describing aspects of symbolic writing. In both classical and modern literature, the techniques have been employed for two reasons; from fear of authority and religious and political persecution on the one hand, or to explain, for example, a serious moral point simply, in the manner of Biblical parables on the other.¹ However, the

1 In classical literature, the *Masnavi* of Mowlānā contains examples of Sufi *tamsil*. See Badi' al Zamān Foruzānfar, *Sharhe Masnaviye Sharif*, University of Tehrān publications 1146/1-2. Vol.1. Tehrān 1346 (1967), Vol.2. 1347 (1968). Qāsem Ghani, *T ārikhe Tasavvof Dar Eslām*, Vol.2 of *Bahs Dar Āsār Va Afkār Va Ahvāle Hāfez*. Tehrān, Ibn Sinā 1330 (1952). *Kelileh Va Demneh* and the *Marzbānnāme* also include *tamsil*. 'Ubaid Zākāni employed *tamsil* in order to avoid political persecution, see A.A. Halabi, *The Development of Humour and Satire in Persia with Special Reference to 'Ubaid Zākāni*, University of Edinburgh Ph.D. thesis, 1980. pp.185-194. In the modern period, *tamsil* is also frequently found e.g. in *Hedāyat* and *Farzād*, *Vagh Vagh Sāhāb*, occasionally in the works of Sādeq Chubak, (*Cherāghe Akher*), and more obviously in the works of S. Behrangī, (*Māhe Siyāhe Kuchulu*), where Behrangī is concerned to make political and moral points simply so that children may understand them.

tradition should not be exaggerated, and it is more that the use of these techniques, with specific exceptions, forms a general background to Persian literature, rather than classical or modern Persian literature is a symbolic medium. Iranian writers have an inbuilt tendency to express themselves with subtlety and allusion, and thus intentionally and often unintentionally, allegory slips in.

However, on occasion, writers have been forced to resort to the use of *tamsil* when commenting on contemporary society as a refuge from political repercussions, and in those instances "symbolism, allegory and ambiguity ... have thus in the Iranian context become weapons of resistance".² Thus Mirzā Fath 'Ali Ākhundzādeh, writing in 1871, described the pragmatic response of the writer to restrictions of freedom of expression;

"It's a risky business writing and publishing things about contemporary people. All the more so in a country like Iran which has not yet granted to intellectuals the freedom to write and publish. So what are we to do? ... The answer is simple, you simply place the action in the reign of Safavid Shāh Soltān Hosseyn, when everything was in disorder ... Or, if people object to that, then choose some other reign ... And if a name like Ashraf Khān is too well known at the present day, change it, call him Heydar Khān or Rustam Khān ..." 3

- an opinion held also by the author Gholām Hosseyn Sā'edi

-
- 2 Dr. A.R. Navābpur, A Study of Recent Persian Prose Fiction with Special Reference to the Social Background. Ph.D. thesis, Durham University, 1981, p.249.
 - 3 Letter in Turkish from Ākhundzādeh to Mirzā Aqā Tabrizi, dated 28th June 1871. Mirzā Fath 'Ali Ākhundov, Eserli Vol.2, Baku 1961, pp.362-363.

95 years later, when in Jalāl's presence, he commented on the problems of avoiding censorship and other restrictions on freedom of expression;

"Suppose that I have found a subject ... what do I do with it? I cannot put it in this (historical) period. If I do so, it will not be put on the stage. Then I take (it) 50 years previously". 4

Thus while the occurrence of tamsil is not a fundamental characteristic of the literature of the modern period, there is nonetheless an established tradition of allegorical writing in Persian literature as a whole, as a method of avoiding restrictions on the freedom of expression, and enabling the writer to comment on contemporary society.⁵

The occurrence of tamsil in the fiction of Āle Ahmad follows the pattern found in Persian literature as a whole. Overall, it is not of fundamental importance in his work. It is, however, found on occasion in some of his works. In exceptional cases it was employed for specific political reasons (The Tale of the Beehives and The Letter N and the Pen). Throughout his work, the tamsil is not elaborate, nor comprehensively worked out, but at the most makes general political points within a broad framework of a specific period of time.

Jalāl was not primarily concerned with tamsil as a technique

-
- 4 Āle Ahmad, Kārnāme-ye Seh Sāleh. Goftogu Bā Dāneshjuyāne Tabriz, Ketābe Zamān. n.d. p.177. Many of Sā'edi's plays and stories contain tamsil, for example Āye Bi Kolāh Āye Bā Kolāh, Chub Beh Dasthāye Varazil, 'Azādārāne Bayāl.
 - 5 Bāqer Mo'meni has also observed the need to employ tamsil or alternative forms of writing in order to avoid censorship. Dah Shab, Kānune Nevisandegān, 1978, pp.253-265.

of writing. The majority of his short stories are descriptive sketches or reports of isolated incidents or experiences and do not contain symbolic or allegoric elements. Indeed, the realism of his short stores should be emphasised, taken as they were from events in real life occurring either to Jalāl or members of his family, or friends, or recorded in his day to day diaries. While every writer uses his own experience as raw material for fiction, Jalāl did so to an unusual extent. His stories owe little to the imagination.

It is not possible to trace all the origins of Āle Ahmad's short stories in real life, but nonetheless an indication of their basis in reality may be given. The stories contained in the collection *Az Ranji Keh Mibarim* were culled from Jalāl's experiences in Māzandarān and Gilān following the repression of the Tudeh Party in 1946.⁶ The sketch *Seh Tār* was the result of an occurrence observed by Jalāl.⁷ The events in the story *Zane Ziyādi* actually occurred, and the stealing of the presents in the story *Nezhat al Dowleh* also actually occurred.⁸ *Goldastehā Va Falak* relates the real event in Jalāl's life of climbing the minarets of a mosque while at school.⁹ *Jashne Farkhondeh* similarly describes his father's reaction to the unveiling of women,¹⁰ the story *Khwāharam Va 'Ankabut* describes the actual death of Jalāl's sister from cancer,¹¹ and the events

6 Āle Ahmad, *Az Ranji Keh Mibarim*, Sho'levar, Ābān. 1326(1947).

7 Āle Ahmad, *Seh Tār*, 3rd ed. Amir Kabir 1349 (1970) pp.9-15.

8 Āle Ahmad, *Zane Ziyādi*, 6th ed. Ravāq 1357 (1978) pp.45-66, 183-201.

9 Āle Ahmad, *Panj Dāstān*, 2nd ed. Ravāq 1356 (1977) pp.9-24 and see Āle Ahmad, *Modire Madraseh*, 4th ed. Amir Kabir 1350 (1971) p.33. He observes that he was bastinadoed in front of other children for climbing the minarets of the Mo'ir Mosque, which 'dominated our school'.

10 Āle Ahmad, *Panj Dāstān*, op.cit. pp.25-44.

11 Ibid. pp.45-66. And see Āle Ahmad, *Sangi Bar Guri*, Ravāq, 1st ed. 1360 (1981), p.89.

in the story Showhare Amrikā'i were related by the woman concerned to both Jalāl and Simin Dāneshvar in their house in Tajrish.¹²

Thus, as is to be expected with a writer with a strong sense of political commitment, Jalāl's fiction has little to do with fantasy and imagination, and is based firmly on reality.

However, within this framework, there is evidence of a certain amount of tamsil in some of Jalāl's short stories. On the issue in general, Jalāl has observed;

"Sometimes I made an amusement in this area".

and added that he did not like writing in such a way, as he preferred to be explicit. But, as political circumstances occasionally forced the issue;

"Sometimes a man takes refuge in this manipulation of writing, i.e. technique, and these games".¹³

Amongst his short stories, Jalāl specifically admits to a symbolic or allegorical element only in the stories Mohite Tang, Jā Pā,¹⁴ and to allusions in the collection of stories

12 Āle Ahmad, Panj Dāstān, op.cit. pp.67-82.

13 Goftogu Bā Jalāl Āle Ahmad, Andisheh Va Honar, 5th period No.4. p.404.

14 Ibid. p.404.

Panj Dāstān.¹⁵ Within these stories, it is suggested, the tansil is of a general nature, and is not a specific or elaborate structure.

Mohite Tang is in the collection *Az Ranji Keh Mibarim*. The setting of the collection is in late 1946, when the government moved in to suppress the Tudeh Party following the collapse of the Āzerbāijān Democratic Republic, and militant worker groups who had taken over major towns, factories and railway junctions in Māzandarān, Gilān and Gorgān. Jalāl was in the area at the time as an official of the Tehrān Provincial Committee of the Tudeh Party. The leading characters of all 7 stories are either party activists or those suspected of being so. The style of the stories is socialist realism, according to Tudeh Party policy. The stories are not in themselves symbolic. They stand on their own. Nonetheless, some contain elements of symbolism in depicting the ability of communism to survive adversity, and rise like a phoenix from the ashes of repression. The symbolic element of the stories, then, is limited to the simple message that through the suffering of activists, communism gains strength.

The first two stories in the collection, *Darreye Khazān Zadeh* (Autumn Valley) and *Zirābihā* (Zirabis), are linked together. The first story tells of the suppression of party activists at a mine in a valley called *Zirāb*, to the north of

15 Ibid. p.389; 'Things - signs and hints enabling the reader to follow the subject'. And in *Goftugo*, *Kārnāme-ye Seh Sāleh*, op.cit. p.173, where he describes the story *Showhare Amrikā'i* as an anti Vietnam story. *Khunābāye Anār*, also in the collection *Panj Dāstān*, was first published in *Keyhān Māh*, No.2. *Shahrivar* 1341, pp.147-151 with the subtitle 'Tanz'. At face value, the story concerns the burial rites of Zoroastrians. I do not understand the satire. See *Panj Dāstān*, op.cit. pp.83-87.

Tehrân. The army takes over the mine, there is shooting; many are arrested; and some, including a man called Vesâli, are executed. The second story tells of the experiences of Vesâli's illiterate friend Asad, who is exiled to Kermân with 82 other Zirabis. Asad finds work in Kermân, is discontented as a result of his experiences at the mine, and leaves for the south of Iran. Some months later, a letter is received from Asad by the chief engineer of Zirâb. The letter is beautifully written, very literate, and communicates the information that Asad, the simple apolitical worker has through his experiences in Zirâb and Kermân, found a new and rewarding life. This simple message appears to symbolize Asad's conversion to the Party, for which he is now apparently active. Thus the Party has brought education, widening horizons and a reason for living for a simple worker.

The events in Zirâb made an indelible impression on Asad;

"The events which occurred in those days for him were not a story of the past. They were events which always took the face of the present, and were before his eyes. He could not forget". 16

As a result, Asad cannot sing as before,¹⁷ and finds a new life in the south, where;

"You see that a new world has opened for me ... here they get used to our words much faster. As though they are familiar with them. When I relate the events to Zirâb, and all the events of the north to them, it is as though each one had a sister or a brother there for whom they weep". 18

16 Zirâbihâ. Az Ranji Keh Mibarim, Amir Kabir, 2nd ed. 1357 (1978), p.20.

17 Ibid. p.22.

18 Ibid. p.30.

Thus Asad, inspired by his experiences, and the death of his friend Vesâli for whom his grief is as large as the sea he now fishes, understands that;

"I have changed greatly ... I feel that I have found my path better than before ... it is as though many of my narrow views have gone ..." 19

In short, through his experiences, he discovered communism, and communism has given him a reason for living.

The tamsil in Mohite Tang²⁰ (Narrow Environment) is of the same general nature. The story concerns a party activist called Rahmân, imprisoned in a small, dank cell with 27 other activists. The title of the story indicates not only the narrowness of the actual physical surroundings of the cell, but also refers to the restrictive political environment in which there is no room for the expression of communist views. Rahmân, as the leader of the inmates, complained to the prison authorities that the room was too narrow, and as a punishment, is made to stand up all night. He fails to do this, and is beaten by the head guard. In retaliation, he attacks the guard, is then removed from the cell, beaten up, and thrown back in the cell in the morning, close to death. Thus in the prison, as in society, the expression of a simple critical view is met with violence and repression. As he is dying, however, Rahmân calls his fellow inmates around him, and assures them that all is not lost, that the message of communism will continue;

19 Ibid. p.31-32.

20 1st published in Nâme-ye Mardom Year 1 No.9. Khordâd 1326 (May/June 1947), pp.65-70.

"We have been friends. We have been good friends for two or three years. We had work to do. Now there is much work left which we must do ... even if I'm not here ... it's for you. When it's not you, there will be others. The world has not ended ... They will do our work ... The important thing is that they know what we wanted to do ..." 21

Rahmān then dies, leaving the inmates bathed in the light of his martyrdom;

"And it was becoming light like the pale face of Rahmān". 22

Thus within the framework of socialist realist literature, the stories *Zirābihā* and *Mohite Tang* have a symbolic element within them. The symbolism consists in the general message that communism lives despite setbacks, and indeed as a result of the sufferings of activists, including their martyrdom. In addition, the description of the environment in these stories frequently emphasises darkness, cold and dampness, contributing in atmospheric terms to the political climate Jalāl was attempting to create. In this way, the symbolism is not elaborate, nor structured, but is a general message, and an atmosphere.

The symbolism in the story *Jā Pā* (Footprint) is similarly of a general nature, making a single point. There is conflicting evidence of Jalāl's intentions. In one place he has stated that the symbolic element of the story was unintentional, and that it was the poet Shāmlu who pointed it out to him. Although he was aware of it, it was not his intention to use

21 *Mohite Tang*, Az Ranji Keh Mibarim, op.cit. pp.55-56.

22 *Ibid.* p.56.

tamsil.²³ Elsewhere, however, he implies that the symbolism was intentional.²⁴

The story concerns the narrator waiting for a bus, and noticing a footprint in the snow. Wondering whose it is, he discovers with pleasure that it is his own. Feeling very cold, he gets on a bus home, reflecting that there is in fact little point in having a footprint in the snow. On disembarking, he walks along a pavement where all the footprints are mixed and obscured, and observes that the path made by footprints is more useful than the prints themselves. Nonetheless, as he arrives home, he cannot help hoping that his footprints will remain after all.

The title of the story, Persian for 'footprint', is itself a play on words. It is the Persian equivalent of the Arabic 'Asar', meaning not only footprint, but also an impression, effect, and a literary work. Thus the preoccupation of the story is with the narrator's (Āle Ahmad himself) fear of not leaving a mark on the world after he dies. As Jalāl's form of political action was literary, it therefore relates specifically to the writer's fear of remaining unread;

"I saw how much I wished my footprint would remain on the ground".²⁵

he observes, hoping that the print in the snow is his. The possibility that his print might remain warms him, but only temporarily, as he realises that the print itself is of little use, and indeed, that it will not last;

23 Goftugu. Andisheh Va Honar, op.cit. p.404.

24 Āle Ahmad, Sangi Bar Guri, op.cit. p.20.

25 Jā Pā, Zane Ziyādi, op.cit. p.150.

"My footprint will not remain on anything, on anything. Not on snow, not on the earth." 26

However, the activist remembers his political commitment;

"It's not necessary that people's footprints remain. People's footprints should open a road. It is important that a road is opened ... When a road is opened, what use are footprints anymore?" 27

Thus, provided that the literary work contributes to the opening of a road, that is sufficient. However, he repeats the fear of the individualist;

"Beware lest your footprint does not remain ... does not remain on the ground". 28

The allusions contained in the collection of stories of Panj Dāstān are more difficult to pin down. The collection was originally intended to comprise 10 stories.²⁹ The five stories were completed by Farvardin 1343 (March/April 1964), and were published posthumously.³⁰ Āle Ahmad's own observation on the collection was that the stories concerned;

".. the internal problems of a ruhāni family. Through the eyes of a child". 31

It is proposed to consider briefly two of the stories.

26 Ibid. p.153.

27 Ibid. p.154.

28 Ibid. p.154.

29 Goftogu, Andisheh Va Honar, op.cit. p.389.

30 First published 1350 (1971). The story Jashne Farkhondeh had previously been published in Ārash No.1, 1st period.

31 Goftogu, Andisheh Va Honar, op.cit. p.389.

Khawāharam Va 'Ankabut (My Sister and the Spider) concerns the death from cancer of the narrator's sister. She is brought back to her parents house by her sychophantic husband, as she is dying. In a corner of her room, there is a spider's web, in which flies are trapped. Modern medicine has failed to cure the sister, so at her own request, it is arranged for a traditional remedy to be applied; the branding of the cancerous part of the body with hot lead. The narrator, the child Abbās, is ordered to fetch the lead, but does not understand its purpose. The remedy is applied, the sister dies, and Abbās is very distressed. He smashes the spiders web in the corner of her empty room.

It has already been pointed out that this was in fact the manner of the death of Jalāl's sister.³² Thus the primary purpose of the story is a realistic portrayal of a family loss - or 'the internal problems of a ruhāni family'. To that extent, the story stands on its own. However, there are, it is suggested, parallels to be made in the most general terms with Jalāl's own view of contemporary Iranian society. The cancer afflicting the sister is a parallel with the cancerous influence of the West upon Iran.³³ The sychophantic and irresponsible husband is reminiscent of the 'gharb zadeh' intellectual, in this case too busy knotting the tie of his influential neighbour to take responsibility for the sickness in his own home.³⁴ The distancing of Abbās's father from the course of events and his frequent visits to Qom are reminiscent

32 See p. 158 above.

33 Ale Ahmad, *Gharb Zadehi*, 2nd ed. Ravāq, n.d. p.163 and see Chapter 2 above.

34 Khawāharam Va 'Ankabut, *Panj Dāstān* 2nd ed. Ravāq 1356 (1977), p.48.

of the ruhâni who avoids his responsibility and disappears into a cocoon of reaction,³⁵ while the barbarity of the traditional remedy, in conjunction with the evil omened spider's web again repeats Jalâl's opposition to harmful superstition and ignorance. The final smashing of the web, then, is at most a symbol of frustration, and the wished for destruction of this kind of irresponsible, superstitious behaviour.³⁶

The story Showhare Amrikâ'i (The American Husband) has been described as an anti Vietnam story.³⁷ The allusive aspect consists in the implication that the U.S.A. is throughout the world the harbinger of death and destruction. The story actually concerns an Iranian girl who meets an American man in Tehrân. He says that he is a lawyer. They marry. They go to live in the U.S.A. and a daughter is born. Shortly, a former girlfriend of the husband arrives. She tells the Iranian that her husband is not a lawyer, but is a gravedigger in Arlington cemetery. She is horrified. She leaves him, returning to Iran a broken and drunken woman.³⁸

The story describes the Iranian obsession with the U.S.A.. It notes the arrogance of Americans who consider that they have come to Iran "to bring civilisation for you",³⁹ and

35 See Chapter 3, p. 103 above.

36 Dr. A.R. Navâbpur emphasises the symbolic nature of the story, and also of the story Goldastehâ Va Falak. op.cit. pp.168-169; 200-202; 212. I find his interpretations interesting but inconclusive.

37 Âle Ahmad, Goftogu, Kârnâme-ye Seh Sâleh, op.cit. p.177.

38 The profession of gravedigger in Iran is culturally disapproved of. It is not clear whether currently the profession is held in the same light as in the Safavid period, when it was viewed as religiously reprehensible, immoral and dirty, but certainly it is culturally low in status. See M. Keyvâni, Artisans and Guild Life in the later Safavid Period. Durham Ph.D. thesis, 1980. Footnotes 63 and 65, pp.61-63.

39 Showhare Amrikâ'i, Panj Dâstân, op.cit. p.69.

comments on the gullibility of Iranians. The narrator herself is out of place on her return to Iran, drinking whisky and soda, and knowing only Dutch and Danish cheeses.⁴⁰ The woman's experiences took place at a time when bodies of U.S. soldiers killed in Vietnam were being flown back for burial in Arlington. Horrified at her husband's work, the narrator states;

"There is the American capital, and there is Arlington. It is famous throughout the world".⁴¹

The girlfriend points out that;

"All the efforts of Americans end with this Arlington ..."⁴²

and another friend observes;

"It is clear that all of these (Americans) do this work (gravedigging), and for all of humanity."⁴³

Thus once again, the allusive element is a lightweight addition to the basic story, which here concerns the disillusionment of an Iranian wife.

Thus in his short stories, Jalāl was not primarily concerned with *tamsil*, *kenāyeh* and *este'āreh*, preferring a more explicit and realistic style of fiction. Yet on occasion, elements of a symbolic style of writing emerge, intentionally

40 Ibid. p.70.

41 Ibid. p.78.

42 Ibid. p.78.

43 Ibid. p.80.

or not. The symbolism is superficial, and, with the exception of the story *Jâ Pâ*, makes a general political point. It is neither elaborate, nor structured.

The novels 'The Tale of the Beehives' and 'The Letter N and the Pen', however, are intentionally allegories. As in the case of the short stories, the symbolism is neither elaborate nor structured, but makes general political points. Both allegories are in a folk tale form; both are allegories of events occurring between 1941 and 1953.

'The Tale of the Beehives' is the less successful of the two. First published in *Bahman* 1333, (January/February 1955) in an edition of 400 copies,⁴⁴ it was not reprinted until after Jalâl's death,⁴⁵ as he did not consider it a good work,⁴⁶ despite containing some beautiful passages.⁴⁷ It is written in the style of a rural folk tale. Opening with the traditional Iranian equivalent of 'once upon a time' (*yeki bud yeki nabud, gheyr az khodâ hich kas nabud*), the story continues to be related in an intimate tone, with frequent direct appeals to the reader in the use of the phrases, for instance, 'my soul tells for you that ...' (*jânam barâyat beguyad*); 'you who are my master ...' (*âqâm keh shomâ bâshid*), or 'good, now hear from that side ...' (*khub, hâlâ az ân taraf*).

44 Goftogu. *Andisheh Va Honar*, op.cit. p.393. Mir Ahmadi puts the date of publication as 1954, presumably unaware that it was published in *Bahman* month. She also gives 500 copies as the first edition. *Analyse der Werke Galal Ale Ahmad unter Berücksichtigung Sozialer Aspekte*. Friern Universität Berlin 1977, p.24.

45 The second edition was published in 1971.

46 Goftogu. *Andisheh Va Honar*, op.cit. p.393.

47 Ibid. p.406.

beshenavid ...).⁴⁸

The allegory, as has been frequently observed, concerns the struggle for the nationalisation of oil in Iran.⁴⁹

Jalâl has twice referred to the allegorical aspect of the story as concerning oil. He observed that the story refers to a specific time;

"that is X is a fixed time ... the case of the fuel of western factories".⁵⁰

and subsequently noted that;

"I discussed by allusion in 'The Tale of the Beehives', the breaking of the National Front, and the victory of the Companies in the case of oil".⁵¹

-
- 48 For examples of Iranian rural folk tales, see M. Honari, *Owsungun, Afsânehâye Mardome Khur*. Ministere de la Culture des Arts. Centre des Recherches Ethnologique et des Traditions Populaires. Tehrân, 1352 (1973), and Kazem Sâdât Oshkuri, *Afsânehâye Oshkure Bâlâ*, Ibid. For discussions of folk literature generally, and its influence on modern Persian literature, see W. Hanaway; *Formal Elements in Persian Popular Romances*. Review of National Literatures, Vol.2. Spring 1971 pp.139-160. Ibid.; *Variety and Continuity in Popular Literature in Iran*, in P. Chelkowski, *Iran, Continuity and Variety*, NY University 1971 pp.59-75. J. Cejpek, *Iranian Folk Literature*, in J. Rypka, *History of Iranian Literature*, Reidal 1968, pp.609-709. L.P. Elwell Sutton, *Influence of Folk Tale and Legend on Modern Persian Literature*, in C.E. Bosworth, *Iran and Islam*, Edinburgh University Press, 1974, pp.247-254.
- 49 M.C. Hillman, *Âle Ahmad's Fictional Legacy*, *Iranian Studies*, Vol.1X No.4. Autumn 1976, p.252. G.R. Sabri Tabrizi, *Human Values in the Works of Two Persian Writers*, *Correspondence d'Orient* No.11, 1970, p.414. Mir Ahmadi, op.cit. pp.97-98. Dr. A.R. Navâbpur, op.cit. p.202.
- 50 Goftogu. *Andisheh Va Honar*, op.cit. p.393.
- 51 *Âle Ahmad*, *Masalan Sharhe Ahvâlât*, in *Yek Châh Va Do Châleh*, op.cit. p.51.

The question of oil in Iran had been unsatisfactory from a Persian point of view for years. Although the original agreement with the Anglo Iranian Oil Company had been modified in 1933, the change had been one of degree, not of kind, and therefore, remained unacceptable. During the 1940's, there had been protracted negotiations between the Iranian Government and the A.I.O.C., with the object of removing the more objectionable and exploitative aspects of the 1933 Agreement. During this period, the question of oil became increasingly important not only as a genuine cause of economic loss to Iran, but also in terms of representing Iranian independence. Thus the failure to make progress in the negotiations resulted in increased pressure on the Government to take matters into their own hands. In January 1951, Mosaddeq moved a resolution in the Majles calling for the nationalisation of oil. By the 20th March 1951, his Bill for the nationalisation of oil had passed through both the Majles and the Senate. The measure was accompanied by strikes and demonstrations in the oil producing areas, which received little sympathy from the A.I.O.C.. All further negotiations failed, and the measures contained in Mosaddeq's Bill were implemented on his appointment to the premiership.⁵²

However, 'The Tale of the Beehives' is not an exact allegory of these events. As has been pointed out, the allegorical aspect of Jalâl's fiction deals in generalities and not in

52 L.P. Elwell Sutton, *Persian Oil*. Lawrence and Wishart, 1955. M. Fâteh, *Panjâh Sâle Nafte Irân*, Chehr, 1335 (1956). H. Katuzian, *The Political Economy of Modern Iran*, MacMillan, 1981. pp.164-168.

elaborate parallels. Consequently, the allegory deals not with the details of dates and personalities, but with the general discussion of the problems surrounding the nationalisation of oil, and with the simple revolutionary message found at the end of the book.⁵³

At face value, the story concerns a group of bees living unnaturally, in hives provided by the gardener Kamand 'Ali Beg. Each hive has a queen bee (a Shābāji Khānom) who runs the hive and lays eggs. The other bees form four groups; those who gather pollen; the 'builders and architects' who make the honeycomb; the 'guards and sentinels'; and the cleaners of the hives.⁵⁴ Every autumn, a calamity occurs. The stores of honey are removed, leaving only one store in each hive, just sufficient for the winter. Every spring, as the eggs hatch, the hives become overcrowded, and the bees in each hive divide into two groups, one departing to occupy an empty hive provided by Kamand 'Ali Beg.

53 Vosuqi has observed this, in *Jahānbini Va Payāmash*, *Andisheh Va Honar*, op.cit. pp.431-448, and also the anonymous reviewer of the book, published in the same magazine. Some time may be spent in attempting to work out the exact details of events in the story, and linking them to the events surrounding the nationalisation of oil, see *Mir Ahmadi*, op.cit. pp.97-98; *Dr. A.R. Navābpur*, op.cit. pp. 202-203. However, although I think that it is possible that Jalāl did have a specific reason, for example, for describing twelve beehives, there is no evidence of his allegorical intentions, and thus any suggestions as to the numerical significance can only be conjecture.

54 The organisation of the bees was taken from real life. *Simin Dāneshvar* relates with resignation of frequent trips to Karaj in order to inspect beehives. She drew the line however at Jalāl keeping beehives in the yard in Tajrish, fearing that he would one day write a story about large animals. *Showhare Man Jalāl*, *Andisheh Va Honar*, op.cit. p.346.

However, one year, in the second month of spring, an additional calamity occurs. The beekeeper takes the remaining stores of the bees, and replaces them with 'shireh'.⁵⁵ Shireh is not the natural food of bees, but is the food of ants. Consequently, the bees are presented with the danger of ants breaking into the hives.

The bees discuss what to do. Three are dispatched to see if their original home on the mountain is still there - a home where they lived naturally; did not have an annual calamity; nor had to divide their communities annually due to lack of room. The others debate the course of action which should be taken. They eventually decide to migrate to their original home. The beekeeper is left astonished, upset and angry.

The allegory, then, concerns the search for independence by the popular forces in the country in the period leading up to and including the nationalisation of oil in 1951. Kamand 'Ali Beg, the beekeeper, represents specifically the English and the British run A.I.O.C.. The bees refer to him as 'Sâhâb',⁵⁶ a term used by Iranian workers in relation to European technicians in the A.I.O.C.. The wealth of the Imperialist British is represented by Kamand 'Ali Beg's property, which consists of a field, an orchard, a share in a qanât, a garden, and his produce;

"But the thing which was the cause of Kamand 'Ali Beg's fame in all the surrounding villages was the same 12

55 Shireh may be translated as cream, or as 'a weak solution or sherbet of sugar and water'. Dr. A.R. Navâbpur, op.cit. p.202.

56 Sargozashte Kanduhâ, Ravâq, 6th ed. 2537, pp.44, 55, 57, 63, 64-65.

honey hives, on which he had not expended any money, nor work". 57

The honey represents oil, a natural Iranian resource. The annual calamity is the A.I.O.C. or British share of Iran's wealth, in other words economic exploitation. Shireh, 'the food of ants' represents western goods which replace the raw material.⁵⁸ The ants, which attack the hives in search of the shireh represent the U.S.A. (black ants) and the USSR (red ants). The bees, of course, are the Iranian people. The force of the allegory lies in its description of the way in which the bees have lost their independence; the discussion amongst the bees as to what action should be taken; and finally in the symbol for the regaining of independence, or the nationalisation of oil, - the migration to the old home at the top of the mountain.

The bees have lost their independence. They live in hives provided by the Sâhâb; they suffer annually the exploitation of their resources, and eventually are forced to consume western goods, or eat shireh;

"None of us like shireh ... it's not our food. It's the food of ants. Our food is that which we make ourselves". 59

The bees, failing to understand the reasons for the exploitation, have become accustomed to it;

57 Ibid. pp.9-10.

58 For Jalâl's economic view of the extraction of raw materials in return for finished goods, see Chapter 2 above, p.54 .

59 Sargozashte Kanduhâ, op.cit. pp.32-33.

"It is correct that from this autumn to the next they only had one store of provisions, but they were content with that very one. None of them knew how the other stores ... were destroyed. They only knew that at the end of autumn, a calamity occurred, and took whatever food they had. And then they had become accustomed to this too". 60

In the general discussion of what action was to be taken, the characters put forward general views and fears of sections of the population. The senior queen bee, Shābāji Khānom Bozorgeh, argues that it is not possible to remain in a place which has been attacked by ants; that the Sāhāb does not have the interests of the bees at heart; and that the only remedy is to migrate. Arguing against simply accepting exploitation, she states;

".. as long as shireh is in our houses, (and its) smell is stronger than everything else, is it possible to stop them?" 61

because;

"all of you know that ants are robbers who ... have neither art, nor do any work ..." 62

Meanwhile, the Sāhāb is responsible for the calamity. He is exploitative, as

".. he takes trouble over us because our provisions are of use to him. He is not concerned for us. He is concerned on account of the provisions which we make". 63

60 Ibid. pp.15-16.
 61 Ibid. p.53.
 62 Ibid. p.54.
 63 Ibid. p.55.

Her remedy, therefore, is to remove the bees to a place where these calamities cannot occur. In short, to migrate; to regain independence;

"The remedy to our affair is to set off and carry our art to a place where neither the calamity can reach us, nor the ants". 64

Khànom Bàlà, however, argues that the young bees are not prepared to migrate. They are afraid of the consequences, and thus

"It is not possible to abandon house and go this simply". 65

Whereas 'Amgezi Pà Kutàheh denies that the young are afraid, and considers that the migration is in reality flight through fear, and that it is braver to remain. She argues that the bees cannot return to an old lifestyle, and that 20th century reality demands that the hives, the Sàhàb, and even the calamity are accepted as part of life. At least with shireh, she states, the bees will not starve. Thus, arguing for an acceptance of the reality of colonial exploitation, she says;

"In the opinion of the young, migration is a title which the elders have put on flight. It's better we say flight. Fleeing is the work of cowards who cannot enter the battle of life". 66

Nanejun Shaleh puts the reactionary view of prizing a familiar

64 Ibid. p.55.

65 Ibid. p.56.

66 Ibid. p.57.

environment above all else, and of sacrificing everything to the house and home, particularly in memory of the dead;

"In my opinion, as long as they have not taken our house and home from us, every calamity which may may befall us can be tolerated". 67

Naneh Manizheh, however, presents the militant view. She states that it is foolish to consider staying and accepting the exploitation and loss of independence, as "they are destroying our house and home about our heads".⁶⁸ She no longer views Iran dominated by Imperialist powers as her home;

"A house which has been infiltrated by enemies ... is no longer our house. From today on, this town and province belongs to those dirty animals who have crept in, and found their food there". 69

Bibi Jân Khaleh puts forward the Sufi view of acceptance on adverse situations. In her philosophy, the issue is a fuss about nothing, and everyone should just get on with life;

"The world has not ended. The calamity has taken our provision store. Alright, let it take it. We won't die of hunger ... Let's go and give thanks that we are healthy". 70

Shâbâji Khânom Bozorgeh then reasserts her plea for independence, couched in terms of an ideal life free from the calamity,

67 Ibid. p.58.

68 Ibid. p.59.

69 Ibid. p.60.

70 Ibid. p.61.

in the sun with trees, pastures and flowers, and observes;

"This place where we live is not a place which we have built ourselves with our own hands ... If you want the truth, in these cells we do not live for ourselves. We are conscripted for the calamity ... These kinds of houses were a prison for us from when they were built". 71

Her views carry the day, and in a symbol for independence and the nationalisation of oil, the bees migrate.⁷²

The 'Tale of the Beehives' is an unusual story. As a first attempt by Jalāl at mixing a traditional 'qesseh' form with a contemporary political commentary, and involving allegory as a method of avoiding censorship restrictions, it deserves attention, although a rather jerky structure, a lack of character development and the presence of some obscurities in the allegory will inevitably expose the story to adverse literary criticism. Nonetheless, the nature of the story itself, the humour with which it is written, the illustrations by Mohammad Bahrāmi and the romantic rural atmosphere created in some passages, compensate for a lack of finesse.

The allegory 'The Letter N and the Pen' is a far sharper, more intricate and successful work than the 'Tale of the Beehives'. It was first published in Ābān 1340 (October/November 1961) in an edition of 500 copies, some six years following the first allegory, and at the end of the period of change during which Jalāl developed the views found in the book *Gharb Zadegi*.⁷³

71 Ibid. p.65.

72 Ibid. p.69.

73 See Chapter 2 above, pp. 46-47.

Consequently, 'The Letter N and the Pen' is a more mature work. It contains in a fictionalised form his views of the relative corruption of all governments; the specific corruption of the Pahlavi establishment; the hypocrisy and cowardice of the Tudeh Party, and his concept of the responsibility and commitment of the writer. The fundamental debate in the novel concerns personal integrity, presented in the Shii form of martyrdom for one's beliefs.

Hitherto, the novel has not been widely discussed. The contents of the book have been described,⁷⁴ but rarely criticised,⁷⁵ and it is only Vosuqi and Hillman who have felt that the work is of significance.⁷⁶ For Jalâl, however, the book was important, containing, as he observed, personal experience.⁷⁷ He stated that the novel is an allegory; that it;

"is in the tradition of eastern story telling, and I put in it the whys and wherefores of the breaking of the contemporary movements of the Left, in a historical period in order to avoid difficulties with the censor".⁷⁸

-
- 74 Khosro Fathi; Jalâl Âle Ahmad. *Kâveh*, 7th year Âzar 1348 (1969), pp.336-340. B. Forsi, review of *Nun Va'l Qalam*. *Mâhâneye Farhang* No.4. Farvardin 1341 (1962), pp.97-99. Mir Ahmadi, op.cit. pp.120-128.
- 75 S. Bahâr, *Modire Madraseh Va Nun Va'l Qalam Va Jalâl Âle Ahmad*, *Andisheh Va Honar*, op.cit. pp.490-504, criticises the structure of the story.
- 76 N. Vosuqi, *Jahânbini Va Payâmash*, *Andisheh Va Honar*, op.cit. p.436ff. M.C. Hillman, *Âle Ahmad's Fictional Legacy*, op.cit. p.252, and footnote 15, p.264.
- 77 Goftogu, *Andisheh Va Honar*, op.cit. p.406.
- 78 Âle Ahmad, *Masalan Sharhe Ahvâlât*, in *Yek Châh Va Do Châleh*, op.cit. p.54. On an earlier occasion he also observed that he used *tamsil* because the political situation did not allow him to write explicitly. Goftogu, *Andisheh Va Honar*, op.cit. p.404.

In addition to portraying the collapse of the contemporary movements of the left he states that the work concerned responsibility and integrity, the idea of martyrdom for one's beliefs, and was a return to tradition. In Gharb Zadegi, he wrote;

"From when we abandoned the possibility of martyrdom, and contented ourselves with remembering martyrs, we emerged as keepers of the graveyards. I showed this case in 'The Letter N and the Pen'. 79

and he subsequently elaborated this point;

"And then I wanted to describe a problem there - the problem of martyrdom. The problem of martyrdom for a 20th century person ... Things have been ruined since we abandoned martyrdom and were content with the appearance of martyrdom (shahid namâ'i) ... but I have much to say in it about return to tradition (sonnat)". 80

Thus 'The Letter N and the Pen'⁸¹ is a story of the corruption

79 Gharb Zadegi, op.cit. p.58.

80 Goftogu, Andisheh Va Honar, op.cit. p.394.

81 L.P. Elwell Sutton has pointed out that the title is from the opening words of Surah 68:1 of the Qor'ân. See Influence of Folk Tale and Legend on Modern Persian Literature, in C.E. Bosworth, Iran and Islam, op.cit. p.249. Surah 68:1 opens;

1. Nun, By the Pen, and that which they write (therewith).
2. Thou art not, for they Lord's favour unto thee, a madman.
3. And lo. Thine verily will be a reward unfailing.
4. And lo. Thou art of a tremendous nature ...
8. Therefore obey not thou the rejectors.
9. Who would have had thee compromise, that they may compromise.
10. Neither obey thou each feeble oath monger.
11. Detractor, spreader abroad of slanders ...

M. Pickthall, The Meaning of the Glorious Koran. Mentor 1953, pp.409-410. Surah 68:1 was also used in conjunction with Surah 50:1, Qâf and the Qor'ân, by Abu'l Hasan Mirzâ, known as Sheykh al Ra'is, in correspondence with Malkom Khân in 1894, to imply that Malkom Khân's newspaper Qânun, 'composed of qâf plus nun is a revealed and sacred book, its numbers corresponding to the verses and chapters of the Qor'ân' H. Algar, Mirza Malkom Khân, Univ. California Press, 1973, p.226.

of government and individuals. It is a tongue in cheek parody of a traditional story, employing an atmosphere created by the use of the 'gesseh' form, and obscure religious language. Within the whole, which in a manner following Ākhundzādeh's advice⁸² is set in the Safavid period, there are sharp comments on the corruption of the contemporary ruling establishment of Iran, a specific critique of the failure of the Tudeh Party between 1941-1949, and a running debate between the opportunist and the responsible intellectual. It is written in the style of a traditional urban folk tale,⁸³ with frequent use of the phrase 'the sweet tongued tellers of tales have told that ...' (*rāviyāne shekar shekan chenin ravāyat kardeh and*), as well as the more intimate 'You who are the love of my heart ...' (*Jāne delam keh shomā bāshid ...*). There are eight chapters, each called a 'Majles'. There is an introduction (*pishe dar āmad*) and a postscript (*pas dastak*) which form a unit complementary to the novel itself.

The introduction sets the scene of political corruption in the shape of the tale of a poor shepherd, who through the arbitrary nature of government, is selected to replace an executed vizier, by virtue of a hawk landing on his head. Abandoning his shepherd's equipment of a coat, thonged shoes and a staff, he takes up the post but mourns for his family and his village. The shepherd is poisoned when it is another's turn to hold the post, and his family are left destitute.

82 See p. 156 above.

83 The style is similar to that found e.g. in Ibn Soltān Malek-shāhe Maghrebi *Va Jahāngir Ibne Shiruiye*, *Koliyāte Shāh-zādeh*. 'Elmi, Tehrān, and *Koliyāte Ketābe Dāstāne Shirin Ebārate Hāteme Tā'i*. *Sherkate Nesbiye Kānune Ketāb*, Tehrān.

His two sons move to the town, and in order to make a living, open a school.

Meanwhile, the story itself is set in another time, and concerns a town somewhere in Iran ruled by an oppressive and corrupt court. There is a Shāh, a Prime Minister, a corrupt and opportunist religious leader Mizān al Shari'at, a pretentious court poet Khānlerkhān who is seeking the official post of poet laureate, an executioner, an astronomer, and all the trappings of sychophantic, opportunist and adulatory courtiers. The ruling establishment oppress the people of the town with arbitrary executions, imprisonment and economic and political repression. Within the town, however, is a group of Qalandars⁸⁴ whose heretical opinions, humanistic belief in equality, and organisation of peoples' cadres present at the same time solace for the oppressed people and a threat to the government.⁸⁵ The Qalandars first appeared, the story relates, some 30 to 40 years previously, when their leader, Mirzā Kuchek Jafar Dān immersed himself in a vat of nitric acid, and was destroyed, leaving a rumour that he had gone into occultation in order to reappear and bring justice into the world. Currently led by a triumvirate of Torāb Tarkash Duz, a Sayyed and Mowlānā, the Qalandars are a highly organised group of bachelors, whose revolutionary intentions are revealed by the construction of cannon, with the object of taking over the government.⁸⁶ Popular support for the Qalandars increases to the point where the court considers it necessary to leave the town for a period of initially three

84 Dervishes.

85 Nun Va'l Qalam, Ravāq, 5th ed. Dey 1357, (December, January 1978/1979).

86 Ibid. pp.83-87.

days, in order to allow the Qalandars to take power and fail to satisfy the people. Meanwhile, the government makes peace with a rebellious sunni tribe on the borders of the country, purchases cannon, and returns to retake the town and suppress the putative government of the Qalandars.⁸⁷

On the departure of the government, the Qalandars duly take over, the government agents Mizàn al Shari'at and Khànlerkhàn are allowed to remain on condition that they behave themselves,⁸⁸ and initially the Qalandars receive widespread public support. However, as a result of a series of incidents concerning the realities of government, they rapidly lose their support, and in the face of the imminent return of the now armed government forces, are persuaded by Mizàn al Shari'at and Khànlerkhàn to accept a deal whereby they are given safe conduct provided they evacuate the town and pay a substantial sum of money. They leave, protesting that they will go to India in order to reorganise and return, bringing Truth with them.⁸⁹

The historical setting of the story is the Safavid period, and concerns an opposition movement called the Noqtaviyàn. It was an urban religious movement adhered to by literate craftsmen, artists and poets, and was an offshoot of the earlier Horufi movement. The Noqtaviyàn 'preserved the Horufis' numerical cabalistic emphasis as well as the central

87 Ibid. pp.87-95. There is a very amusing exchange in the court, when the refined Prime Minister, the incomprehensible court astronomer, and the sychophantic poet Khànlerkhàn attempt to make the boorish Shāh understand that the court must leave the town for a few days.

88 Ibid. pp.141-145.

89 Ibid. pp.209-215, 221-222.

belief in ghostic union with God through spiritual perfection, while adding a pronounced belief in metempsychosis or transmigration of souls'.⁹⁰

The movement was founded by Mahmud Pasikhāni Gilāni in the early 15th century. He died in 1452, having, it was rumoured, immersed himself in nitric acid. The movement was a dervish-like organisation, meeting in Khānqāhs. Remaining unmarried was deemed to be praiseworthy.

During the reign of Shāh Abbās, however, the movement was persecuted. In 1593, Jalāl Yazdi, the court astronomer of Shāh Abbās, foresaw an unpropitious period for the Shāh, who then withdrew from Qazvin, and placed a Noqtaviyān leader, Darvish Yusefi Tarkesh Duz on the throne for three days, and then had him assassinated, thereby fulfilling the astrologer's prophecy. Subsequently, the movement was suppressed. Many of the members were killed, went into hiding or fled. Some went to India at the invitation of Akbar Shāh, who encouraged freedom of religion.⁹¹

In 'The Letter N and the Pen', Jalāl thus followed an established precedent in placing his criticism of contemporary society in a historically safe period, changing the names sufficiently to indicate perhaps that the setting should not be taken absolutely seriously, and adapting events sufficiently to suit his contemporary purpose.

The contemporary setting of the story concerns the failure and hypocrisy of the Tudeh Party between 1941 and 1949. The Tudeh Party was the main progressive party in the early 1940's.

90 S.A. Arjomand, Sufism and Sunnism in Safavid Iran. *Journal of Asian History*, Vol.15, No.1, 1981, pp.7-9.

91 S. Kiyā, Noqtaviyān Yā Pasikhāniyān. Tehrān, 1320 (1941). pp.5-12.

Dominated by a hard line leadership, the party failed to capitalise on the opportunities presented between 1941 and 1946, and many, including Jalāl had left the party by 1948 with a great sense of disillusionment.⁹² Following an attempt on the life of the Shāh in February 1949, the Tudeh Party was banned, and many of the party leaders escaped to the USSR and other East European countries.

In character with Jalāl's tendency to use *tamsil* in order to make general political points, rather than specific and elaborate structures, the details of personalities, the positions of power achieved, and the specific dating of events during that period are not found with any accuracy in the story. That was not the point. The point was to describe the hopes that the people placed in the Tudeh Party, the party's inability to fulfill these hopes, and finally the hypocrisy and cowardice of the final departure of the leadership to exile in Moscow and other East European capitals, in order to reorganise and return, bringing justice and freedom with them.⁹³ As Jalāl cryptically observed;

92 See Chapter 1 above, pp. 6-23.

93 For the role of the Tudeh Party during these years, see S. Zabih, *The Communist Movement in Iran*, University of California Press, 1966, pp.71-165; H. Katuzian, *The Political Economy of Modern Iran*, MacMillan 1981, pp.141-160. And for a resentful view of the Tudeh Party at its most machiavellian, see F. Keshāvarz, *Man Motahem Mikonam ... Ravāq*, 1977. Keshāvarz was a member of the Central Committee, who went to Moscow. He was subsequently drummed out of the Party, accused inter alia of sheet stealing (sic).

"A number got up and went to India so they might return and bring freedom for us ... this is the background of the story". 94

However, within the historical setting and the contemporary allegory, there lies a running debate on an issue which Jalāl felt was crucial to contemporary Iranian society - that of the integrity, responsibility and commitment of the intellectual. The debate is conducted by the two main characters - the scribes Mirzā Asadollah and Mirzā 'Abdol Zaki, with occasional contributions from the character representing the Tudeh Party activist, Hasan Āqā. Mirzā Asadollah represents the responsible intellectual; the writer with integrity. A simple man, he has sympathy with the ordinary people of the town, with whom his work is concerned. His speciality is writing complaints on behalf of the people against those in power, writing letters to relatives of townspeople, and writing receipts for Bāzāris.⁹⁵ Thus he is an individual committed in his profession to serving the best interests of the public. He is useful to the community. Not a religious man in the strict sense, he nonetheless has a firm belief in Truth, in acting according to principles. Consequently, in his profession as scribe, he is upholder of the Truth. The pen is his medium, and he considered it the first creation.⁹⁶ In discussing his son's inheritance, he states that his father

94 Goftogu, *Andisheh Va Honar*, op.cit. p.394. In a letter to me, Dr. Vosuqi pointed out the Tude'i aspect of the novel, writing that the book criticises 'the activists, cadres and specially members of the Central Committee of the Party who fled to the Soviet Union when the party was outlawed'. Letter dated 29th November 1981.

95 Nun Va'l Qalam, op.cit. pp.22-23.

96 Ibid. p.27.

told him that everything which has ever been written;

".. has been made of the same 32 letters ... give or take one or two ... every curse, evil, every Holy word, even the name of God ... they are all written with the same 32 letters". 97

and thus he will bequeath to his son the same alphabet, with which the tradition of upholding the Truth, the Word, must be upheld.

Mirzâ 'Abdol Zaki, however, is the opportunist. Childless, but relatively wealthy, he has pretensions and ambitions. On the fringe of the court, he specialises in copying out the poetry of the sychophant Khânlêrkhân,⁹⁸ to whom he is distantly related, and making money out of the misfortunes and superstitions of the populace. He composes charms for them;

"Yes, Mirzâ 'Abdol Zaki wrote talismans. Herze Javâd for getting out of conscription, for avoiding the evil eye, for curing the poison of snakes and scorpions, for good luck, for the survival of dying children, and for other 1000 cureless pains which were beyond the knowledge of the homeopath. And he charged silver 2 grân coins for any of these kinds of talismans". 99

In the words of Asadollah, 'The Writer can take two roads,

97 Ibid. pp.41-42.

98 Ibid. p.29. Khânlêrkhân is one of the distinctly recognisable characters in the book. He is based on the character of Parviz Nâtel Khânlêri, one time editor of the establishment literary magazine Sokhan, and subsequently Minister of Education between 1962 and 1964. Sadeq Hedâyât originally bestowed the title Khânlêrkhân on Khânlêri. He and Ehsan Tabari (see Chapter 3, footnote 37, p.104 above) were Jalâl's great targets, representing the opportunist intellectual.

99 Ibid. p.31.

truth and falsehood'.¹⁰⁰

Hasan Āqā, however, presents a contrast to the other two. The son of Mam Rezā, a wealthy Bāzārī who supports the Qalandars, Hasan himself is a convinced Qalandar. He is an activist, with a firm belief in the philosophy of the movement, and an intention to serve its needs.

The debate continues throughout the story. The three major issues are the will of Mam Rezā, (a discussion in which Hasan Aqā does not take part in a significant sense), whether the Mirzās will assist the Qalandar government or not, and the issue of the flight to India.

The bāzārī Mam Rezā was murdered by government agents posing as Qalandars.¹⁰¹ The establishment, in the shape of Mizān al Shari'at and the Kalantar have suggested that there is a dispute over the will. They offer to allow Mirzā 'Abdol Zaki to settle the dispute, provided one third of the property is formed into a religious endowment.¹⁰² 'Abdol Zaki asks for Asadollah's assistance, which is given. They attend to the will in Mam Rezā's village, some distance from the town. They are accompanied by several guards. On arrival, it transpires that a plot has been laid, and that the Mirzās

100 Ibid. p.225. There is a temptation to suggest that Asadollah represents Āle Ahmad himself. While the beliefs professed by Asadollah are undoubtedly the views held by Jalāl, the similarity ends there. Asadollah had two children. Jalāl had none. 'Abdol Zaki was sterile (pp.19, 51 and 63ff.). Jalāl's sterility was a major problem for him and Simin. See Sangi Bar Guri, op.cit. He wrote that 'Abdol Zaki remained childless as a reflection of his own difficulties. Ibid. p.20. Dr. Navābpur has suggested that Asadollah represents Khalil Maleki, op.cit. p.297 footnote 42. I think it is quite possible that Asadollah is a Maleki-like hero figure expressing Jalāl's opinions.

101 Nun Va'l Qalam, op.cit. p.70.

102 Ibid. p.45.

are to be bribed into drawing up the following division of property; 2 dāngs to be awarded to the Prime Minister, 2 dāngs to be made into a religious endowment, under the supervision of Mizān al Shar'iat, 1 dāng to be divided amongst the Mirzās, and 1 dāng to be awarded to the Kalantar. Hasan Āqā's brother is held hostage against the bargain being sealed. The family of Mam Rezā is to get nothing.¹⁰³

The main characters react to this expropriation by the establishment in different ways. They discuss what action should be taken. Hasan Āqā is of the opinion that property is expendable at the price of saving the lives of the activists.¹⁰⁴ He disagrees with Asadollah that defence of property is within the realms of jehād and thus is a route to martyrdom, stating;

"These days a person is a martyr who is martyred for his beliefs, and has sacrificed his property for his belief". 105

In other words, that an ideological system is to be prized above all else. Asadollah, however, has little sympathy for the rigidity of the Tude'i belief.

"I do not believe in this new way of yours. But I know what my duty is according to the old ways. It is not necessary for many to pursue a new way in order to have belief. The older the belief the better. In any case, I am in control of my own signature". 106

He states that he cannot go against the Truth, even for

103 Ibid. pp.104-105.

104 Ibid. p.109.

105 Ibid. p.109.

106 Ibid. p.110.

the sake of the safety of his children. Asadollah firmly upholds the integrity of his family;

"As long as I can remember, we, father after father, have made a living from the pen. But never have any of us interfered in the blood and property of the people". 107

And he refuses to sign the document.¹⁰⁸

'Abdol Zaki, however, is less clear as to which side is right. He is afraid of the establishment, and worries that the whole issue is a plot engineered by Khànlerkhàn who has designs on his wife.¹⁰⁹ He justifies collaboration, saying that he fails to see what difference it will make to the villagers;

"What difference will it make to these villagers who the owner of these properties is, whether the heir of the Hājī, or somebody else? ... Why do we trouble ourselves?" 110

And he points out that if they don't sign the document, inevitably someone else will.¹¹¹

Thus the issues are laid out; personal belief in a system of thought; personal integrity and responsibility; and opportunism, giving way to the strongest pressure, and taking the easy way out.

The debate is renewed when the Qalandars have taken over the town, and Hasan Āqā, as part of the Qalandar government,

107 Ibid. p.112.

108 Ibid. p.121.

109 Ibid. pp.117-118.

110 Ibid. p.116.

111 Ibid. p.115.

requests the assistance of the two Mirzās. Hasan Āqā suggests that the Qalandars are worthy of support as they serve Truth and the needs of the people;

"And besides, you know that our cause is that of truth ... we are bound to the service of the people". 112

Thus he emphasizes the altruistic nature of the Qalandar experiment. His own responsibility is that of the proselytizer;

"The same Truth and Duty ... command me to act, move, hope, resist, not surrender to oppression, And I become a martyr so that at least you look on the world through the blink of my eye ..." 113

Mirzā 'Abdol Zaki, the opportunist, is naturally delighted at his chance to attain power, gain influence and further his ambitions.¹¹⁴ His reaction to Hasan Āqā's invitation is quite simple. He sees the opportunity for self advancement and is more than willing to take it;

"Whenever I think that the rest of (my) life must be spent in this cell with these customers and these trivialities which all stink of the mortuary, my heart sinks. Well, you must move, my dear, have change, variety ..." 115

'Abdol Zaki can scarcely contain his disbelief at the soul searching of Asadollah.

112 Ibid. p.115.

113 Ibid. pp.165-166. This is reminiscent of the martyrdom of Tudeh Party activists described in Az Ranji Keh Mibarim. See above, pp.160-163.

114 Nun Va'l Qalam, op.cit. p.153.

115 Ibid. p.156.

Asadollah does not wish to be involved in a system of government in which he has little confidence and less belief;

"Both of you know that I am not one of those who does anything which comes to hand. For me, the cause of every action is belief, is principles. First belief, then action". 116

In a practical manner, Asadollah views every government as the same. He doubts the success of the Qalandars in the face of the government, and admits that he is afraid of bloodshed. Consequently, he does not wish to be involved;

".. I said that I do not have your foundation of belief, and you know better than I that one can only proceed with one's eye shut on the basis of belief". 117

Indeed, Asadollah questions the validity of closed systems of belief;

".. each new religion and sect stirs the Heydar Ne'mati quarrels 118 ... and becomes a new excuse for excommunication, then bloodshed and settling personal scores ... Gone is that time when religions could have been the source of basic changes". 119

and equally the claims of any government to justice;

116 Ibid. p.154.

117 Ibid. p.156.

118 Two urban Shii sects who were in conflict between the Safavid and Qajar periods. H. Mirjafari, The Haydari - Ni'mati Conflicts in Iran. Iranian Studies, Summer/Autumn 1979 Vol.12, pp.135-162.

119 Nun Va'l Qalam, op.cit. p.158-159.

"At heart I am opposed to every government, since the necessity of each government is to use force, and then inhumanity, confiscation, execution, imprisonment and exile. Mankind has been dreaming of the government of the philosophers for 2000 years. Whereas philosophers cannot easily issue a judgment, let alone govern. From the beginning of time, government has been manipulated by thoughtless people. Governments have been manipulated by those hooligans who have supported an adventurer in order to attain their own ends". 120

The only real Truth lies in integrity; in responsibility; in martyrdom;

"The power of the Truth is in the word martyrs". 121.

Asadollah contrasts his position with one of complacency, and waiting for the appearance of the Imam of the time to restore justice.¹²² He refuses to allow that martyrdom is the prerogative of religious people,¹²³ and he states that the Imam of the time is within each person;

"The important thing is that every person acts according to the duty of the Imamate of his own time. The burden of responsibility means the same". 124

Asadollah is, however, finally persuaded to help the Qalandar government. He agrees to look after justice in the town, but points out that it is easier for the other two;

120 Ibid. pp.160-161.

121 Ibid. p.163.

122 Ibid. p.164.

123 Ibid. p.164.

124 Ibid. p.166.

"You Sayyed, are naturally a man of action, an adventurer. Good luck to you. And you, Hasan Āqā, have faith. And what is better than that." 125

The debate is finally closed after the government of the Qalandars has lost public support. They have resorted to oppression, killing and imprisonment in order to keep control. The government has laid siege to the town.

Provisions become scarce; panic buying starts; religious students complain that the grant to the madraseh has been cut off; government spies spread rumours; the populace loses confidence in the Qalandars. The situation deteriorates.¹²⁶ Mirzā Asadollah dryly observes in an obvious jibe at the Tudeh Party, that there is no difference between the government and the Qalandars, who attempt to govern;

"With no plan ... and all are in wait for natural developments, developments from abroad ..." 127

It reaches the point where none dares to go out unarmed. Three Bāzāris are executed by Qalandars without trial; the bazaar shuts, and the government of the Qalandars becomes increasingly like that of the Court;

"They put levies on the gates, watched the comings and goings of the people, taxed the bars and the refreshment shops. They halved the allowances to the religious school students and to the women's quarters of the castle, and the same to the allowance of the leper colony and the lunatic asylum ..." 128

125 Ibid. p.169.

126 Ibid. pp.182-189.

127 Ibid. p.196. This refers to the classic Tude'i justification for failure; that the circumstances of the time were not right, that the inevitable progress of world revolution ... etc. See Chapter 1, p.13 above.

128 Ibid. p.204.

The population rises up in protest against the Qalandars. Mirzà Asadollah gives the order for the troops to fire upon the people, resulting in several deaths.¹²⁹ The Qalandars' gunpowder store is blown up by agents of Mizàn al Shari'at and Khànlerkhàn. The Qalandars have little alternative other than to accept the offer of safe passage in return for a sum of money and their disappearance.¹³⁰

The final conversation then revolves around the issue of the impending departure of the Qalandars. It is a conversation in which the party activist takes no part. His commitment to the people has led him to conclude that he can best serve their interests from India. He has resolved to flee; to abandon his beliefs and the people to their fate.

'Abdol Zaki has also resolved on flight. He is making the best of a bad situation, and is going with the Qalandars, leaving his wife to the mercies of Khànlerkhàn.¹³¹ Ever the realist, 'Abdol Zaki points out the danger of remaining to Asadollah¹³² and fails to see why life should be more difficult than it has to be. He defends his pragmatic approach to Asadollah;

"Have you forgotten that you said you must have a plan in advance? Well, my dear, this flight is a plan. It is preparation for afterwards. My dear, it is kind of resistance".¹³³

Mirzà Asadollah, however, is adamant that he will not go. He will stand by his actions; carry the burden of his responsibility.

129 Ibid. p.206.

130 Ibid. pp.220-223.

131 Ibid. p.224.

132 Ibid. p.224.

133 Ibid. p.225.

He observes that he has committed no crime¹³⁴ and that he will stay in order to fulfill his duty;

"When a person flees from something or from somewhere, it means that he no longer tolerates the condition of that thing or place. And I want to tolerate it. For me it is the first (part) of (self) examination". 135

He dismisses the argument that flight is a preparation for return;

"Flight is not resistance; it is the emptying of the battlefield. Someone who flees deprives himself of respect. Even in a game one either must win or lose. There is no 3rd side. It is not a bāzār negotiation where a broker steps in between. It's the negotiation of truth and falsehood". 136

He says the real test for him is just beginning;

"For me, the most effective kind of resistance in the face of oppression is martyrdom. Even if I am not worthy of it. As long as government is by oppression, and nothing we do is effective, truth can only be kept alive by means of martyrdom ... It is true that martyrdom will not remove oppression from people's lives and property, but it will take the rule of oppression from the spirit of the people ... and this is the burden of responsibility. The heritage of mankind is the same". 137

Thus Mirzà Asadollah remains, to face the consequences of his actions; to carry the burden to his responsibility, and to keep the Truth alive.

134 Ibid. p.224.

135 Ibid. p.225.

136 Ibid. p.225.

137 Ibid. p.226.

The postscript returns to the tale of the shepherd, with which the story opened. The postscript summarises the main debate in the novel, encapsulating the difference between the gharb zadeh opportunist and the intellectual with integrity in relation to their Iranian heritage.

Following the death of the shepherd vizier, his two sons opened a school in the town with money from their inheritance. One son, clearly the opportunist, sold his share of the inheritance to a stranger,¹³⁸ rediscovered his old court friends, and paid bribes until he became a court scribe. He eventually attained the post of poet laureate.¹³⁹ The other son, however, remained working in the school until he was able to buy out the stranger. Thus he carried out the burden of his responsibility by putting himself in a position where he could control his heritage.¹⁴⁰

The unreliability of the Writers, the Copiers, and the Tellers of Tales, however, is reaffirmed.¹⁴¹ The story tellers, while they agree that the son who retained the school wrote the story, they disagree as to who that was. Some say it was 'Abdol Zaki, others say it was Asadollah. Jalâl, however, leaves us in no doubt as to which of the two he favoured. The postscript ends with the fact that on one of the copies of the story was written a note from Asadollah to his son, whereby Asadollah bequeathed the story to his son.¹⁴² In short, Jalâl wishes us to believe that the story was written by his alter ego, Asadollah.

138 Gharibeh - derived from 'gharb', meaning west.

139 Ibid. p.233.

140 Ibid. p.233.

141 See Resâleye Pulus Rasul, above in Chapter 4, p.150.

142 Nun Va'l Qalam, op.cit. p.234.

Thus the novel 'The Letter N and the Pen' contains Jalāl's mature views on government and individual corruption, the hypocrisy of the Tudeh Party, and his concept of the responsibility and integrity of the writer. The writer, or the intellectual, is portrayed as facing two roads - that of falsehood or that of truth. Falsehood, opportunism and irresponsibility are the actions of the gharb zadeh intellectual, who through his actions sold not only his own integrity but also the integrity of Iran. Truth, responsibility and integrity are the characteristics of the true intellectual, who may defend his own credibility and that of Iran with his art, and ultimately by his personal martyrdom.

In 'The Tale of the Beehives' and 'The Letter N and the Pen', Jalāl thus chose the course of displaying his commitment to social and political change by the means of resistance through allegory. It was, however, a medium in which he was not entirely happy. He was not fundamentally a symbolic writer, and thus the symbolic elements of his fiction are on the whole superficial and simple. Jalāl preferred to be explicit in his criticisms of contemporary society. It is, perhaps, more characteristic of Jalāl to involve himself in resistance through realism.

CHAPTER 6

RESISTANCE AND REALISM: MODIRE MADRASEH

For Jalâl, as a writer and political activist, resistance through realism was a more satisfactory form of expression than resistance through allegory. His own experiences and observations of life under Pahlavi Iran provide the basis for his criticisms of contemporary Iranian society, which he communicated best through the medium of fiction based on fact. *Modire Madraseh* and *Nefrine Zamin* are his most significant contributions in this area, and within the limits set by a repressive political environment, display the art of the political activist.

Modire Madraseh (The Headmaster) is one of Jalâl Âle Ahmad's most famous works. First published in 1958, in an edition of 500 copies, it found almost instant acceptance, and the success of this book over the next decade contributed significantly to his influence as a writer.¹

Divided into 19 chapters, the book is an abridged, episodic account of a year at an elementary school in a northern

1 The number of copies printed in subsequent reprints testifies to the popularity of the book, and indicates Jalâl's rapidly increasing fame;
 2nd ed. 1962- 12 thousand copies.
 3rd ed. 1966- 22 thousand copies.
 4th ed. 1971- 27 thousand copies.
 Taken from M. Mir Ahmadi; *Analyse der Werke Jalâl Âle Ahmad Unter Berücksichtigung Sozialer Aspekte*. Freie Universität Berlin 1977, p.31.

suburb of Tehrân, seen exclusively through the eyes of the narrator - the Headmaster. The book starts with the Headmaster obtaining a job at the school, and ends with his resignation from the post. The chapters in between deal chronologically with a series of incidents which occur at or are connected with the school. The incidents concern the teacher, children, parents, and administrative and bureaucratic difficulties. Being an account, written in a loose diary form, there is no plot, nor character development, and the book is held together solely by the dominating role of the Headmaster.

Beyond the isolated incidents described in the book, the work concerns a small part of the system - that is, it concerns an elementary school which is part of the education system. The education system itself is part of the modernised, westernised governmental system increasingly imposed on Iran since Qājār times, and which has included judicial, military, administrative, educational and bureaucratic reforms. In this sense, while *Modire Madraseh* concentrates on elementary education as practised in one particular school, it has wider implications because the school experience is interlinked through government policy to the whole question of modernisation, westernisation and government control. Āle Ahmad, commenting on *Modire Madraseh*, has observed that it is;

"The result of special thoughts and quick emotional notes concerning the very small but very influential area of education and the school, but with explicit indications of the general conditions of the time ..." 2

2 Jalāl Āle Ahmad; *Masalan Sharhe Ahvâlât*. In *Yek Châh Va Do Châleh*. Ravâq 1343 (1964), p.52.

Educational reforms started in Iran during the Qājār period, and were greatly expanded and rationalised during the reign of Rezā Shāh and Mohammad Rezā Shāh. The Pahlavi Shāhs did not qualitatively change the style of educational reforms commenced under the late Qājārs, (that is the adoption of a westernised education system including a westernised syllabus) but greatly increased the resources available for educational reform. The broad outlines of the reformed education system were laid down in the Education Laws of 1910 and 1911, whereby compulsory elementary education was called for, and four types of schools were defined, all to be under the direction of the Ministry of Education.³ Rezā Shāh increased the resources available for the expansion of this embryonic system to the extent that between 1928 and 1941 the annual budget of the Ministry of Education increased by nearly 11 times, outstripping the rate of increase of the annual budgets of the Ministries of War, Foreign Affairs and Justice. The concentration on the need for an expanded education system continued between 1941 and 1948, when the education budget more than doubled again. Even allowing for inflation, the Ministry of Education again enjoyed a proportionately greater budget expansion than the Ministries of War, Foreign Affairs and Justice.⁴ Similar figures are not available for the post 1949 period, when the Plan Organisation took over most aspects of development in Iran. However, the concentration on education continued. Whereas in 1940 there were

3 S. Akhavi; Religion and Politics in Contemporary Iran. State University New York Press 1980, p.35.

4 J. Bharier; Economic Development in Iran. 1900-1970. O.U.P. 1971. Table I p.65 and table 2 p.66.

2331 elementary schools and 321 secondary schools in existence, by 1953 there were 5956 elementary and 527 secondary schools, and by 1966, 21748 elementary and 1682 secondary schools.⁵

Thus although the basis of educational reforms was laid as early as 1910/11, it was only by the 1940's that the increased resources available enabled any significant number of children to benefit from, or suffer under, the reformed, westernised education system.

The expansion of expenditure on education and the resulting increase in the number of schools must be observed in conjunction with the introduction of a "modern" or western syllabus. At an elementary level, in the Maktab, the traditional subjects had included the fundamentals of writing and reading Persian; calligraphy; memorising verses and large amounts of the Qor'ân, some geography, and a form of accounts called siyâq.⁶ Under the new syllabus, subjects studied at elementary level included Iranian history, Iranian and world geography, mathematics, P.E., and Art.⁷ It has been observed that the introduction of a new syllabus, imparting basically western values, (especially when the modernised system is at least theoretically compulsory in contrast to the traditional Maktab-Madrash system) represents a complete break with the traditional past, and has had a dislocating effect on society.⁸

Educational reforms, however, were only part of the whole-sale modernisation of the machinery of government in 20th

5 Ibid. table 5, pp.38-39.

6 Akhavi. op.cit. p.33.

7 A. Banani. Modernisation of Iran. 1921-1941. Stamford University Press 1961, Chapter 6.

8 R. Arasteh. Some problems of Education in Underdeveloped Countries. M.E.J. 12 No.3 1958, pp.270-275.

century Iran. And the adoption of western methods and practices in the administration, health, the judiciary, armed forces, and economic development, and the growth of an overmanned and inefficient bureaucracy⁹ led to the obtaining of qualifications within the reformed educational system being essential for the acquisition of a 'good' job, that is a job with the government. Hence the type of education was orientated towards producing government servants, and educational reforms were crucial to reform in other fields. As a result, the Education system was highly competitive. In addition, there was an insufficient number of schools, colleges, universities, and teachers for the number of pupils, so the pressure to succeed was great. The drop out numbers at every level in the system was high, yet the education imparted at the schools paid little more than lip service to answering the needs of those unable or unwilling to become government employees.

Thus the education system lay at the heart of the westernised governmental system introduced by the late Qājār Shāhs and the Pahlavis. As the basis of all reforms, by educating people along western lines in order to obtain the personnel to implement and administer the reformed systems, it took a child out of his traditional background (particularly if the child came from a poor family); taught him values and criteria which were alien to that background, and those often not well, due to the shortage of teachers, low standards and inadequate

⁹ Observed by S. Rassekh in *Planning for Social Change*, in Yar Shater; *Iran Faces the 70's*. Praeger 1971, p.163.

facilities;¹⁰ subjected him to competitive examinations at an early age, and made little or no provision for his welfare should he fail to attain the required standards.

The elementary school Safâ, in Tajrish,¹¹ was part of this system. Jalâl Âle Ahmad worked there as Headmaster in 1955-1956. The book *Modire Madraseh* is an account of his experiences while working within the system at the school, and of his reactions to those experiences.

In terms of critical appreciation, *Modire Madraseh* is a difficult book to classify. Hitherto it has usually been treated as a novel, and critical appraisal has tended to concentrate on three points; the originality, simplicity and directness of the style in which it was written; the one dimensional nature of the characters in the work; and the form and structure of the book.¹² It is generally agreed

- 10 R. Arasteh; *Some Problems of Education in Underdeveloped Countries* op.cit. p.272. R. Arasteh; *Education and Social Awakening in Iran. 1850-1968*. Brill. 1969, p.129.
- 11 Tajrish, now part of Tehrân, was in the 1950's a separate small suburb to the north of the capital. Jalâl moved there in 1953.
- 12 S. Bahâr; *Modire Madraseh Va Nun Va'l Qalam Va Jalâl Âle Ahmad*. Andisheh Va Honar; 5th period No.4. pp.490-504. M. Tehrâni; *Dâstâne Kutah Va Boland Dar in Sare Zamin*. Ârash Vol.1. No.7, p.144. M.C. Hillman; *Âle Ahmad's Fictional Legacy*. Iranian Studies. Vol.IX No.4. Aut. 1976, pp.249-251. M. Farzân; *Modern Persian Literature - How good is it?* University Penn. Pahlavi University. Lecture Series (Spring 1966). M.A. Jemâlzâdeh *Modire Madraseh*. Râhnamâye Ketâb. No.2. Year I 1337 (1958), pp.167-178. R. Barâheni; *Qesseh Nevisi*. 2nd ed. Tehrân 1969, pp.442-443. B. Alavi; *Geschichte und Entwicklung der Modernen Persischen Literatur*. Akademie Verlag. Berlin 1964, p.222. M. Mir Ahmadi; op.cit. M.C. Hillman; *Introduction to the School Principal*. Tr. J.K. Newton *Bibliotheca Islamica* 1974, pp.7-32. H. Kamshad; *Modern Persian Prose Literature*. C.U.P. 1966. p.126.

that the style of writing was innovative in modern Persian fiction¹³ and that its chief characteristics were the unusual verve and vigour of the language, and its proximity to common conversational Persian. The caricature-like shallowness of the characters (who are nameless and denoted by their function within the school; the Class 3 teacher; the Janitor), has not stood up well to western style literary criticism,¹⁴ while the form, structure and lack of a plot has either been held to constitute the book's greatest weakness or greatest asset.¹⁵ The political content of the book has been largely ignored,¹⁶ although Tikku observes that the author gives "a realistic portrayal of ... the underlying social malaise of the country, the hypocrisy, and the power lust of various classes of people",¹⁷ and Sabri Tabrizi highlights the social criticism contained in the book,¹⁸ while Hillman modifies his earlier view of the weakness of the work in literary terms by stating that "Āle Ahmad's implicit aim in the School Principal ... is to reveal problems existing in

- 13 Although Jalāl himself notes that he had been writing in this style as early as 1954 in *Owrāzān*; Dānesh. Tehrān 1954; See Goftogu Ba Jalāl Āle Ahmad. *Andisheh Va Honar*, op.cit. p.399.
- 14 M.C. Hillman; *Āle Ahmad's Fictional Legacy*. op.cit. p.250. R. Barāheni; *Qesseh Nevisi*. op.cit. pp.442-443.
- 15 S. Bahār; *Modire Madraseh Va Nun Va'l Qalam Va Jalāl Āle Ahmad* op.cit.
- 16 Perhaps the best attempt to emphasise the political content of the book is to be found in; Dr. J. Irāniyān *Vāqe'yate Ejtemā'i Va Jahāne Dāstān*. Amir Kabir. Tehrān 1358 (1979) pp.164-177, although his approach is also not without problems. See below p.233.
- 17 G.L. Tikku; *Some Socio-Religious Themes in Modern Persian Fiction*. In *Islam and its Cultural Divergence*. Urbana. 1971, p.175.
- 18 G.R. Sabri-Tabrizi; *Human Values in the Works of two Persian Writers*. *Correspondence d'Orient*. No.11. 1970 p.412.

the Iranian educational system and its periphery".¹⁹

Thus, in evaluations of *Modire Madraseh* the work has been treated as a novel, with a resulting over-concentration on purely literary appreciation. While the tendency to underplay the political content of the book is understandable in the light of the repressive political climate in Iran between 1958 and 1979, it has nonetheless led to a critical softening of the impact of the book.²⁰ Style, characterisation and form are important in a purely literary sense, but *Modire Madraseh* is not a purely literary work, and as a result, the limited critical analysis to which the work has hitherto been subjected is misplaced.

Indeed, to treat the book as a novel at all is itself questionable. It is an account of his experiences while Headmaster of the *Safâ* elementary school in *Tajrish*, taken from notes he made at the time.²¹ All the characters in the book existed in real life and all the main incidents actually occurred.²² But although the book is written in

19 M.C. Hillman; Introduction to *The School Principal*. op.cit. p.26.

20 And incidently to some curious speculations. M.C. Hillman has been driven to pose the question, "if the actual situation in elementary education were not essentially as *Âle Ahmad* describes it, what would the novel have to recommend itself?" *Âle Ahmad's Fictional Legacy*. op.cit. p.249.

21 See above p. 200.

22 This was pointed out to me by both *Simin Dâneshtar*, *Jalâl's* wife, and *Shams Âle Ahmad*, his brother. *Simin Dâneshtar* makes the same point in a more general way in *Showhare Man Jalâl*; *Andisheh Va Honar*, op.cit. p.346. G.L. Tikku, commenting on the book, writes; "This work, as he told me last year (February 1969) was published from the notes he had taken during one of his teaching assignments ..." *Some Socio Religious Themes in Modern Persian Fiction*. op.cit. p.176. *Farzân* describes the book as a "(Semi)-autobiographical work". *Modern Persian Literature; How good is it?* op.cit. p.13. *Irâniyân* makes the same observation in *Vâqe'iyate Ejtemâ'i Va Jahâne Dâstân*. op.cit. p.164.

diary form, it would be equally wrong to consider it purely as a diary. At most it is an impressionistic diary, dealing with selected events. Furthermore, Jalāl, as a writer, not as a diarist; made conscious efforts in terms of language and style to present the work as a literary contribution. He has stated that;

"I worked very hard at the prose of *Modire Madraseh*". 23

and went on to describe it as a "special prose". He admits a specific influence from Celine's novel "*Voyage au bout de la Nuit*"²⁴ both in terms of prose style and in the isolation of the narrator.²⁵

23 Goftogu Ba Jalāl Āle Ahmad. *Andisheh Va Honar*. op.cit. p.400.

24 Ibid. pp.399 and 402.

25 It is arguable that the influence of Celine on Jalāl can only have been stylistic. He enthusiastically describes the novel "*Voyage au bout de la Nuit*" as the masterpiece of French Literature (Ibid. p.402). While the novel was received with considerable excitement on publication in France in 1932, where it won the Prix Renaudot, and was welcomed by the left as it portrayed in a horrifyingly gruesome manner, what was then hoped to be capitalism in its death throes, Celine's later activities as an anti-semitic pamphleteer and his inopportune decision to flee to Germany in 1944 to join the Nazis, clouded his literary reputation. One feels, therefore, that Jalāl was influenced not by the political content of "*Voyage*", although he undoubtedly felt sympathy for the views expressed in the novel, nor by the later political affiliations of Celine, of which to a certain extent he was aware. (Ibid. p.402). There have been recent attempts to reevaluate the works of Celine; J.H. Matthews - *The Inner Dream, Celine as a Novelist*. Syracuse University Press. 1978. P. McCarthy; *Celine*. Allen Lane. 1975. M. Thomas; *Louis-Ferdinand Celine*. Faber 1979.

Thus the classification of *Modire Madraseh* as fact or fiction has problems. It would seem to be erroneous to classify the work as pure fiction, and equally erroneous to classify it as pure fact. Here it is suggested that the book must be viewed as based on fact - on real experiences, yet presented in a way concomitant with the literary considerations of prose and style. It is fact wrapped up in style.

There will be no attempt here to evaluate the style or language in which *Modire Madraseh* is written. The concern here is with the political content of *Modire Madraseh*; the substance of the book. And it is to Jalāl himself to whom we must turn in order to understand the real weight of the work in terms of a political statement.

Jalāl's most illuminating comments on *Modire Madraseh* are to be found in his letter to Jemālzādeh,²⁶ written in response to the latter's review of the book in *Rāhnemāye Ketāb*.²⁷ Jemālzādeh had been living in self-imposed exile in Geneva for thirty years, and as a result was out of touch with affairs in Iran. Yet he was impressed with the book, and felt that its virtue lay in its realism, and the way in which the author was searching after truth. He comments favourably on the simplicity, fire and enthusiasm of the language, and on the short sentence style, and, for him, the novelty of some of the expressions used by Āle Ahmad. He points out the value of the work in terms of a description of the education system in Iran, and adds that the Headmaster

26 See *Do Nāmeḥ*, in *Andisheh Va Honar*; op.cit. pp.362-373.

27 Jemālzādeh, op.cit.

resigns as a result of the torture of spirit and conscience he suffers; in other words because it was his duty to resign.

This review incensed Jalāl. He immediately wrote a lengthy reply, which is in essence a personal, vindictive attack on Jemālzādeh. He objects to Jemālzādeh's literary approach to the book, and indeed considers that Jemālzādeh having politically opted out not only in his style of writing, but also in his prolonged absence from Iran, has forfeited his right to comment and criticism. In short Āle Ahmad considers that the nature of the book, the character of the Headmaster, and the author, to be none of Jemālzādeh's business. Allowing, however, for the rather over-emotional and extravagant response of Jalāl,²⁸ the reply does provide an interesting view of Jalāl's own feelings about Modire Madraseh. In an obvious dig at Jemālzādeh, Jalāl wrote;

"With the publication of nonsense like Modire Madraseh I want to feel that I have not yet died; I'm still not suffocated; still haven't fled".²⁹

and he continues;

"That which your honour imagined to be a work of literature is in no sense so. It is a work of anti-literature. And if you want the truth, it is a work of life and death, and it therefore is connected to existence. Those pages are an eternal curse - a spit on this age ... I am screaming with pain..."³⁰

28 Jalāl's fury was moderated certainly by his wife, to whom he read the letter first, and by his friends, who persuaded him to delay sending the letter. It was finally sent a year after he wrote it. Considering the offensiveness of Jalāl's letter, Jemālzādeh's reply is a model of courtesy and conciliation. Jalāl appears to have later regretted his excess, and on a trip to Europe in the early 1960's, visited Jemālzādeh and apologised.

29 Do Nāmeḥ, op.cit. p.369.

30 Ibid. p.369.

Jalāl, then, was concerned with commenting on his experience of working within the educational system. He describes the problems he was faced with, and the effect of the system on himself, the teachers, the children and the parents. In *Modire Madraseh* he makes a personal political statement. Here it is proposed to give a political interpretation of the book; to attempt to show the way in which, through the "character" of the Headmaster, Jalāl chose to make public his personal political experience.

The book *Modire Madraseh* is in essence a condemnation of the system. It is an account of how one man, already aware of the defects of the system (specifically in this case the education system) and determined to stay out as far as possible, is nonetheless drawn in, and forced by circumstances to become involved. He is drawn in because, as Headmaster, he is unable to completely avoid his responsibilities, and on a human level cannot help but involve himself in the problems of the children, teachers and parents. However, as he is reluctantly drawn in, he becomes increasingly and predictably frustrated by the system and the contradictions it produces; by the bureaucracy, by the type of education dispensed, and by the discrepancy between the values held by the parents and those found within the school. He also sees his increased involvement as a trap set by the system, which persistently tries to draw people in and gently submerge them in its own brand of corruption and illogicality. In the end, the pressures which have been increasing on him during the course of the year have their effect, and he caricatures the

demands made on him by the system by excessively beating a boy for a common-place occurrence at a boys school; the punishment not being his own view of what should happen, but actually being what the system expected him to do. Finally, the system shows its truly insidious nature by not allowing him to protest, to defend, or even comment on his experiences. It suffocates; at which point he resigns - the only thing he can do.

The narrator, the Headmaster, is already totally disillusioned with teaching and the education system at the time he applies for the Headmasters job. He considers the post as an easy option; as a front behind which he can hide and get on with his own work; and as an escape route from the mindless task of imparting useless information to frequently stupid children. He is thoroughly sick of teaching;

"Ten years teaching the alphabet; the stupified faces of the children at the silliest rubbish you can imagine; *esteghnâ* with the letter *gheyn* and *estegrâ* with *qâf*; *Khorâsâni* and Indian styles of poetry and the oldest Persian poem; devices like proverbs and anadiplosis ... these kinds of idiocies. I saw I was turning into a donkey. I said I'll become a headmaster. An elementary school headmaster. I'll no longer teach; my conscience will no longer waver over a grade 12 or 14, or I'll no longer be forced to give a grade 7 to every fatuous idiot in order to avoid the waste of time of resit exams..." 31

In obtaining the Headmasters job, he considered that;

"I had flown from the teaching cage". 32

31 Jalâl Âle Ahmad; *Modire Madrasesh*. 4th ed. Tehrân 1350 p.7.
 32 Ibid. p.14.

Thus the principalship was a means of escape; an escape from a system with which he was already completely disillusioned. Once established in his position as Headmaster, he wanted as little to do with the running of the school as possible. Content to let the masters and the Nàzem³³ administer the school, he wanted to step to one side, shut the door of his room, and let the world out there get on with itself. He hoped that;

"I'd go and close the door behind me and get on with my own work free from the headache of running a class. The Nàzem or somebody else will look after things, and there is a system which doesn't need my interference". 34

He explains to the Nàzem that he wishes to avoid the responsibilities of running the school,³⁵ and comments that, apart from paternal feelings towards the children,³⁶ he considers that he will have little to do with them;

"At the start I paid little attention to the children. I imagined that the age difference between us was so great that we'd have nothing to do with each other". 37

However, his expectations from his new post prove to be

33 This word means supervisor or registrar of the school. However, it was not a merely administrative post, and the Nàzem's duties included teaching. Perhaps the closest English equivalent would be usher. However, as the term usher is hardly in frequent usage in English, and has associations with the public school system, it is felt that its use here is inappropriate. As a result, the word Nàzem will not be translated.

34 Ibid. p.16.

35 Ibid. p.23.

36 Ibid. p.16.

37 Ibid. p.81.

over optimistic. Not only does he tire of his own work,³⁸ but he cannot completely avoid his responsibilities and he is drawn into school life on the issues which affect either the welfare of the children or the teachers.

At his first meeting with the children, he becomes aware of his responsibility for them;

"If tomorrow one of them breaks another's head; if one is run over by a car; if one falls off the upper balcony; what should I do?" 39

It is, however, when the system administers physical violence on the children, in the form of the Nàzem's customary morning beating of them, that he is first forced to intervene. The Nàzem is representative of the system in that he not only has a narrow disciplinarian approach towards the children, but also he wishes to progress within the system.⁴⁰ To that end he is fully prepared to indulge in the corrupt bureaucratic practices demanded by the system.⁴¹

On the Headmasters third day at school, he arrives to find the Nàzem caning five boys. He cannot ignore it;

"I was close to shouting or kicking him, or hurling him to one side ..." 42

He restrains himself, however, and merely intervenes, asking the Nàzem to forgive the children whatever crimes they may

38 Ibid. p.81.

39 Ibid. p.16.

40 Ibid. pp.98-99.

41 Ibid. pp.45-47.

42 Ibid. p.32.

have committed. Yet he inwardly reflects;

"But that little kid's hand was so small; his face looked so like a cat's, and he was crying so much that really I was on the verge of hitting the Nàzem in the face and breaking his cane over his head". 43

Through his humanitarian concern for the children, the Headmaster becomes involved in their material welfare. He arranges for monthly visits of a doctor to check their health, and for the obtaining of first aid supplies.⁴⁴ At the onset of bad weather, he arranges for the school stoves to be lit 10 days earlier than allowed by the regulations.⁴⁵ His concern for the unsuitability of the childrens' winter clothing leads him, through the mediation of the new Janitor, to persuade the Anjomane Mahalli⁴⁶ to supply 80 sets of shoes and clothes for the more needy children, in addition to arranging for gravel to be delivered to cover the muddy school playground.⁴⁷ Following the establishment of the Parent-Teacher Association, and the purchase of some sports equipment funded by parental contributions he reflects;

"Truly my mind was at ease ... the important thing was that the school hall had some life in it, and was being used for something. The children at least had a ball to chase and a set of weights under which they'd sweat and breathe deeply so their chests would develop and they'd be able to digest their bread and cooked rice better". 48

43 Ibid. p.32.

44 Ibid. p.36.

45 Ibid. p.48.

46 A group of wealthy local people, self appointed, whose concern is to look after the interests of the locality.

47 Ibid. Chapter 7.

48 Ibid. p.110.

He becomes similarly involved in the welfare of the teachers, although he holds a cynical and denigrating view of them. He describes the teachers as having peculiar physical characteristics and strange habits of dress.⁴⁹ Followers of western fashions, they are described as ignorant, narrow minded and quiescent,⁵⁰ yet on a human level he is content to work with them;

"I was happy to have an opportunity to get to know these new people, and to find out about their problems, and to enter new closed worlds".⁵¹

And so he becomes drawn into their problems.

His first involvement occurs when the class 4 teacher is run over by a car driven by an American who had recently come to live in the area.⁵² This is an important event in the book as on the one hand it highlights the way in which he is drawn into the course of events, and on the other hand how is frustrated by them. The anger and frustration produced by this event will be dealt with later. Here it is sufficient to observe that the practical result of the accident is that the Headmaster visits the teacher in hospital, and makes various arrangements concerning the interests of the teacher;

"That night I was awake until 2 a.m. The next day I wrote a detailed report signed by the Headmaster and witnessed by all the teachers for the Education Department and the local Police station. Then

49 Ibid. pp.12-15.

50 Ibid. pp.81-82.

51 Ibid. p.15.

52 Ibid. p.71.

hassling in the Insurance office, and arranging that they pay 9 tomans a day towards his hospital expenses, and in the afternoon, after a while, I went to school and cancelled the classes, and sent the teachers and the class 6 children to visit him, and sent flowers and that kind of thing". 53

In a similar way, he helps the Nàzem over his difficulties with his mother, who needed treatment for cancer. The Headmaster accompanies the Nàzem to his home, and persuades her to enter hospital for treatment, going with her to enter hospital and staying with her until she was settled;

"The next day when I came to school, the Nàzem was in fine form. It was clear that he was free of a heavy burden". 54

On another occasion, the Headmaster visits the Class 3 teacher, who has been arrested for association with Communism.⁵⁵ On the way to the prison, he discusses the problems of the imprisoned teacher with the arithmetic teacher, including the facts that his salary was to be stopped, his father and mother send him nothing, and there was no organisation to help him.⁵⁶ Following the visit, the Headmaster goes to see the new Director of Education, explains the difficulties and asks him if it is possible not to cut off the teacher's salary.⁵⁷

Thus despite his original intention to use the newly acquired post of Headmaster as a way of opting out of the system as far as he could, he is inexorably drawn into the course of

53 Ibid. p.80.

54 Ibid. p.95.

55 Ibid. Chapter 17.

56 Ibid. p.123.

57 Ibid. p.126.

events due to his innate feelings of responsibility and his humanitarian feelings for the welfare of both the children and the teachers.

However, as he is drawn into the course of events, he is increasingly frustrated by the system with which he inevitably comes into contact. In a system which produces a corrupt and ponderous bureaucracy, a system which imposes a type of alienating education, the Headmaster is left as ineffective as a piece of driftwood, swirling around attempting to run a school despite the bureaucracy, despite the type of education he is supposed to administer, and despite the interference of uncomprehending and confused parents.

As far as his contacts with the bureaucracy are concerned, he is frustrated at every turn. In the opening chapter of the book, he comes across a representative of the bureaucracy in the shape of the Director of Education, to whom he has to go in order to obtain the job. Yet despite having certainly obtained a post through bribery at a lower level, the Headmaster has to suffer the self-importance and pomposity of the Government's representative, who is unnecessarily obstructive in order to enhance his own reputation.⁵⁸ Once in charge of the school, the problems multiply. Even matters as simple as the telephone and electricity of the school become matters of monumental convolutions;

"I had taken out and read the school electricity and telephone statements from the pathetic school records. If you took some trouble, the school electricity and

58 Ibid. Chapter 1.

telephone would be fixed in two or three years. Twice I dropped into the Building Office and renewed the subject. Once or twice I resorted to friends who thought at first that I was arranging private work for myself in the school's name - so inevitably I dropped it. That's how far I had to go to perform my duty". 59

Suspicion and corruption are also characteristics of his dealings with the Education Officer over delivery of coal for the school stoves. While the official bill from the Education Office recorded a delivery of 12 kharvâr,⁶⁰ the official receipts had no quantity recorded. However, when the Headmaster completed the receipts by filling in 12 kharvâr received, he was severely chastised by the Nâzem for undue honesty, and warned that in future, affairs may be delayed as a result of breaking the customary corrupt deals with the Education Office.⁶¹

When necessary, the Headmaster is well able to use the illogicalities of the system. On visiting the Class 4 teacher in hospital, he is faced by the apparently insuperable obstacle that official visiting hours are over by the time he arrives at the hospital;

"On the hospital door was written 'entry forbidden after 7 o'clock'. The door was huge, with the aura of a mortuary door. I knocked. From behind the door someone uttered the same verse. I saw there was nothing for it but to get help from something. Strength, rank or stature - from something. I deepened my voice, and said 'I ...'. I wanted to say that I was the Headmaster, but I instantly regretted it. The fellow would undoubtedly question what kind of animal a Headmaster was. After all,

59 Ibid. p.38.

60 A measure of weight equivalent to 3000 kilograms.

61 Ibid. pp.45-47.

he was the doorkeeper of such a large door, and not a corporal on guard duty at a newly built police station who would flatter his local Headmaster. So with a slight pause and plenty of pomp, I completed my sentence; 'I am an inspector from the Ministry of Education'. The bolt creaked, and the door opened a crack". 62

The whole ludicrous situation is summed up in the following way;

"Others build houses so as to get the rent in dollars and the Class 4 teacher of my school gets run over by their tenants and at that time of night I chase an unknown misfortune that I didn't ask for". 63

The bureaucratic frustrations continue over the matter of the school budget. Having avoided the visit of Ministry of Education officials to the school for the purpose of working out details of the school budget,⁶⁴ he discovers that in order to obtain an entertainment allowance, he must give a lunch for the officials. This curious criterion for the allocation of funds provokes him to observe;

"Three hundred tomans of the government's budget depends on whether you go to some gathering or not. Three hundred tomans, of which for every 2 tomans items at least 12 rials of paper, ink, bills and notebooks were consumed. Only in situations like this can one understand what 'office' means, or 'ministry'". 65

The accumulated frustrations experienced in contact with the system's all pervading bureaucracy leads him to feel

62 Ibid. p.73.

63 Ibid. p.74.

64 Ibid. p.97.

65 Ibid. p.98.

utter contempt for it and all it stands for. He castigates the irrelevance of the bureaucracy and the kind of qualifications need to succeed within it. To achieve a position within a ministry, he observes one needs;

"Half a gross of prepared signatures, each one presenting one personality; then 20 inches of smooth oily tongue with which you extract snakes from holes, or lick everywhere; and a handful of faces. Not one kind - 12 kinds. Just like a set of claws. Each one for a different thing". 66

Whereas the pervasive bureaucracy is one aspect of the system which is a continual source of frustration and limitation on the Headmaster, the type of education which the system imposes on the children is in itself an irrelevance. It is remarkable that in a book concerning solely part of the education system in Iran, there is so little about education in the sense of equipping the children for their needs in life. The school itself is an alien imposition; the type of education imparted is irrelevant to the needs of the children; and the end result produces not men equipped for life, but men filled with fear.

In describing the school, the narrator points out that the school was not built for the needs of the community, but for profit;

"A wealthy philanthropist put up his building in the middle of his own land and put it at the disposal of the Ministry of Education for 25 years, so they would make a school out of it, there would be activity; roads would be made, and all these kinds of things, until the parents would change their plans, and, in

order to make it easier for their children, would come and buy up the area surrounding the school and build houses, and the fellows land would be worth 100 tomans a metre instead of one rial". 67

Thus the existence of the school itself is a result of the landlord's eye for investment, and not a response to the needs of the community.

Similarly the education system ignores the fact that many of the children are materially inadequately equipped for attending school in the winter. With the onset of rain, the school virtually ceases to function - the playground becomes a muddy morass, and absenteeism increases tenfold.⁶⁸ Realising that the problem is inadequate clothing, and in particular shoes, the narrator wryly observes;

"Before this I had read lots of rubbish about what the basis of education it - teachers, blackboard cleaners, proper toilets, or a thousand other things. But here quite simply and primarily, the basis of education was shoes". 69

Again, concerning the inadequacies of the education imparted by the school, and the preoccupation with marks, he angrily and despairingly comments on the handicraft classes in the school, which should theoretically be more relevant to the practical needs of the children in later life. He observes that the children spend much time constructing little that is not trivia;

67 Ibid. p.7.

68 Ibid. p.50.

69 Ibid. p.49.

"And for what? To get a better mark at handicrafts ... Now even the ministers of education admit that these names and formulae and dates and learning by heart will not fill a place in the unemployed lives of the childrens' future, and inevitably every child should learn something in school - an art, a skill, a trade. So that if nothing comes of the certificates and framed bits of paper, their tables won't be bare and none will die of hunger. Then what could be better than handicrafts? So long live cardboard shoe and sweet boxes. ... and more so coloured oil paper at one rial a sheet. ... (only) one person in a thousand could open a frame making shop or an inlay shop, or swop his jigsaw for a hacksaw and nuts and bolts and screwdrivers. God bless the father of this education with its handicrafts, which has increased the employment of itinerant grocers, and that conduct mark and that left-turn right-turn, and borders and lakes and exports of Ethiopia. and its sport and handwriting practice". 70

The epitome of the silliness of this system is the conduct marks, which it is the sole privilege of the Headmaster to bestow;

"I had never thought that you could sit and in the same way give a mark to children, and that too a conduct mark which is a mark like all the rest, like the mark for important subjects like history, religious law and maths. That too according to criteria such as three months ago a child blew his nose hard or softly behind your door, or whether when talking to the Nāzem yesterday he bowed his head or not ... and you, just like a minister, shut your door behind you and casually put on paper the personality of every child with all its characteristics, in the name of the conduct mark, and in the form of one number. And then you send the report to the mother and father, and they enthusiastically read it and show it to others, and boast about the fact that they have an obedient child. With one conduct mark of 20. What an important job you have, don't you?" 71

This, then, is the kind of system which is producing the

70 Ibid. p.113-114.

71 Ibid. pp.114-115.

men of tomorrow. Irrelevant subjects; superficial marks; and exams; - all contribute to producing men of fear;

"I saw that these men of the future in these classes and exams will be so afraid, and their minds and nerves will be so terror struck that when they receive their diplomas or graduate, they will be a completely new type of person. People stuffed with terror. A bag full of fear and worry". 72

Indeed, what else is a diploma or degree certificate other than a piece of paper which confirms that;

"The owner of this paper spent 12 or 15 whole years and 4 or 10 times a year under the pressure of fear - and his motivation is fear, fear, fear". 73

In between this ludicrously inappropriate, ineffective system and the children who have the misfortune to suffer under it come the parents. Concerned for their children, yet uncomprehending of the style of education in operation, they are both confused and demanding. The Headmaster has to act as a kind of broker between the system and the parents. He has to try to mend the dislocation produced by the difference in values between the home and the school; to pacify the parents whose values he does not necessarily agree with himself, and to defend the education system with which he wholeheartedly disagrees.

The difference in values between home and school is highlighted by two incidents. The first incident concerns a child who was given some photographs of naked women by the

72 Ibid. p.116.

73 Ibid. p.117.

class 5 handicraft teacher. The child's father discovers the photographs, and presents himself to the Headmaster to complain bitterly;

"What kind of education is this? May it be destroyed. Oh Islam. Then what confidence can the children have in the school?" 74

He continues by threatening to have the school shut and to demand an explanation from the Minister of Education,⁷⁵ and is only pacified by the Headmaster's declared intention to sack the teacher in question - an intention, however, which he will not carry out. Instead, he merely comments on the teachers naivety, and suggests he refrains from doing it again.⁷⁶

The second incident is far more significant, and contributes to the Headmaster's resignation. One boy seduces another. The parents of the seduced boy arrive to complain, considering that the Headmaster is responsible for the loss of family honour. The father angrily states;

"If I were the Headmaster and such a thing happened I'd slit my own stomach. Shame on you man. Go and resign. Pick up your ears and run, before the local people come and tear you apart. Children come here to learn lessons and good morals, not to ..." 77

The Headmaster is bemused by the accusations of his irresponsibility. He personally considers the matter little to do

74 Ibid. p.60.

75 Ibid. p.61.

76 Ibid. pp.65-65.

77 Ibid. p.128.

with him;

"What is the protection of children's honour to me? Was it for the protection of the children's genitals that they made me Headmaster?" 78

and indeed sympathises with the predicament of the children, growing up in a closed and restricted family society;

"The kid probably can't even play with his female cousins. In his family the girls probably have to veil themselves from the boys of the same age from 10 or 12 years". 79

He finds this kind of interference from the parents to be another source of frustration. From the policeman who comes personally to beat his son at school on discovering that the canes are no longer in use,⁸⁰ to the father who wants his son to be enrolled in the school as part of a money making plan to move out of town and let his town house as a school,⁸¹ to the parents of the seduced child, it all adds to his sense that there are two worlds in operation - the home life and the school, and that the school in its present form is an irrelevance;

"With these parents, children have the right to ... turn out to be showoffs, thieves and liars. These schools should first be opened for the parents". 82

Thus despite his intention, the Headmaster is drawn into

78 Ibid. p.130.
 79 Ibid. p.130.
 80 Ibid. p.59.
 81 Ibid. p.105.
 82 Ibid. p.132.

events, yet finds the system under which he has to operate totally inappropriate and frustrating. While he is aware of being drawn into the system, he feels that the process of involvement is a trap. In order to achieve anything within the system, he has to compromise, and therein lies the danger; the danger through compromise of accepting the values of the system, and so being further drawn in. The system holds out temptations, corrupt deals, secure jobs for those prepared to work within it, with both hands, and leaves no alternative for those not prepared to compromise, other than stepping out of it altogether.

After his experience with the corruption associated with the coal delivery, he observes this phenomenon;

"I couldn't do any work until midday, except several times write my resignation and tear it up ... this is how they put the first step in front of a man". 83

He finds the same difficulty over the distribution of the school funds, when he discovers that he is obliged to give a meal for the government officials in order to obtain an entertainment allowance.⁸⁴ Again he is faced with the choice of compromising; of doing what the system expects, or refusing to have any part in it. Attend the meal, or stay away. Compromise with the system or resign and get out. These are the bald alternatives. The third choice of staying within the system yet refusing to compromise is the most difficult; to remain like a square peg in a round hole. But

83 Ibid. p.47.

84 See p219 above.

here the result would be an unequal battle whereby the peg would be continually, abrasively worn down to fit roundly into the system. He reflects;

"Well, are you going or not? Look stupid. They say this is the first step. It's always like this. They create an opportunity, just like you're in now. They give you character and importance. They'll blow you up like a balloon and then tie you to the branch of an acacia tree which has thorns everywhere. When they've created a situation for you, they won't let you understand what's going on. Just like now. Your Nâzem is sick to death ... he doesn't want to be crushed to death by these wheels (of the system). He doesn't always want to remain a Nâzem ... Either give up and leave or take the first step. Give the meal - then eat it. It's simply barter. Then the second step then the 14th, and aha, now you are a director, and in the middle of it. Truly a government sponger. Crafty opportunist; flatterer; rigidly following the rules; considering points like retirement, increments for being married, provincial work, and entertainment accounts. - Ugh. I was suffocating. Once again I put my resignation in my pocket, and without saying a thing, I did not go on the day of the meal". 85

perhaps needs explanation

However, realising that this is a rather inconsequential issue on which to resign,⁸⁶ he changes his mind, and for the moment remains within the system. But he observes;

"When I thought about it, I saw that whatever ruinous corner of life you fall into, little by little you sink so far into the meanness and you become so used to it, that you don't even want to protest". 87

Thus the predicament the Headmaster finds himself in is severe. The pressure on him is considerable. Continual pressure to give in; to compromise; to take the first step.

85 Ibid. pp.98-99.

86 Ibid. p.100.

87 Ibid. p.100-101.

The system tries to bend him to fit it. Every way he turns in his job he is faced by frustration and obstruction. To be an effective Headmaster running an efficient school and giving the children a useful education is impossible in the environment described in the book. Bureaucratic corruption and inefficiency; teachers, themselves products of the education system, are inadequate, ignorant followers of western fashions whose greatest pleasure is to turn up for school five or ten minutes late;⁸⁸ a form of arbitrary education irrelevant to the needs of the children; the children themselves materially illequipped to absorb even a useful form of education, let alone the irrelevancies drummed into them; parents whose values are far removed from those taught at the school; and all the time the inevitable, continual, insidious pressure of the system to give in, to join it, and above all, not to protest, criticise or comment.

The final two chapters of the book represent the culmination of these pressures on the Headmaster, and the book ends with a delightful piece of tanz,⁸⁹ which represents the author's final accusation against the system.

Through the incident of the two boys who have a homosexual involvement, the Headmaster releases all the tensions which have been building up in him during the course of the year. He takes out his frustration and anger at the system on the seducer, caricaturing the system's expectations by administering an excessive beating;

88 Ibid. p.58.

89 Satire.

"I dragged him out in front of the children and punched and kicked him, and then broke three canes, which the new janitor had immediately brought from a neighbours garden, over his head. I was so wild that if I hadn't had the canes, I would have killed the kid". 90

The child is taken away, cleaned up and sent home. The Headmaster returns home and tells his wife what has occurred, and that the boy is the son of a wealthy director of a bus company, and as a result it is likely that the Headmaster will be taken to court.⁹¹ The sense of disgust which the Headmaster feels for the system which has produced this situation, leads him to look upon this as an opportunity;

"I really want the matter to go to court. A troublesome year is weighing on me, and now I'm exhausted. I want someone to ask me why I beat a child in this way; why I inflicted corporal punishment. After all a Headmaster has things to say which must be said somewhere ...". 92

He will use the court appearance as his third choice - that is not to join the system, nor to drop out of it, but to publicly protest and criticise; to make known all the things which contributed to making life at the school impossible and intolerable. He will use the court appearance as an opportunity to protest against the system.

Before his appearance in court, he writes a summary of his comments which consist in a detailed criticism of the education system;

90 Ibid. p.129.

91 Ibid. pp.131-132.

92 Ibid. p.132.

"Comments which, with all the nonsense, every minister of education could turn into a seven year plan". 93

and at the appointed time, he attends the court. However, rather than finding the opportunity to protest, he is met by the bland comments of the appointed inspector, who blithely states;

"There is no need for these comments. It was a small matter, and (now) its been resolved. We don't wish to trouble you ..." 94

It is the ultimate whitewash. Having suffered under the system, having observed the effect of the system on others, having refused to 'take the first step', to compromise with the system, having hoped to find an opportunity to protest and criticise, he now finds that opportunity taken from him. He is not even allowed to protest against the system at his own trial, because there will simply be no trial. It was to have been at the Ministry of Justice where he would have made his accusations against the injustice of the system. Yet even there, there is no justice - but a cup of tea, a chair, and a bland dismissal in the form of a few placatory words. So symbolically, and extremely appropriately, he writes out his resignation on the back of his court summons,

93 Ibid. p.134.

94 Ibid. p.134.

and puts it in the post.⁹⁵

His resignation is a final gesture of defiance against the system. There is no other avenue open. It is the only thing he can do. He cannot stay within the system because he is not prepared to compromise, nor to stay silent. He cannot protest against the system because rather than allow his voice to be heard, they will overlook the fact that he almost killed a child. He can only resign - step outside the system. It is not from a sense of high minded duty that he resigns; it is an act of defiance, anger and disgust.⁹⁶

The book *Modire Madrash* is a personal political statement by the author. It is a description of a difficult time, actually experienced and observed by the author, and presented in a literary form. It is a wholehearted condemnation of the system - "an eternal curse - a spit on this age", a scream of pain.⁹⁷ It is in fact a presentation in diary form of the accusations he would have made in court, but was prevented from so doing.

That *Modire Madrash* found an almost immediate sympathetic response in Iran, there is no doubt. In the original, it is a powerful book, written with a delicate, knife-life cynicism

95 His resignation is presented as a piece of tanz. While being accused himself in the Ministry of Justice, he was going to make his own accusations against the education system. When prevented from doing so, he writes his resignation on the summons, thereby making his accusations symbolically, at the same time as highlighting the lack of justice found even within the Ministry of Justice. This action indicates that the courts should be accusing not the victims of the system, but the system itself.

96 This view is in contrast to *Jemälzâdeh*, op.cit.

97 *Do Nameh*, op.cit. p.369.

and humour.⁹⁸ Its presentation in terms of language and style facilitates the communication of the content in a way which makes the book easily approachable and understandable. The fact that many of its Iranian readers will have experienced the same sort of illogicalities and frustrations in their own progress through the Iranian education system has certainly contributed to the existence of a sympathetic audience,⁹⁹ and Jalāl's own increasing fame as an opposition writer in the 1960's, and posthumously in the 1970's, has ensured the success of the work in the eyes of the growing numbers of the younger generation who aligned themselves with the opposition to Mohammad Rezā Shāh and his government.

While an understanding of the political content of *Modire Madraseh* is essential for grasping the real weight of the book, it would be a mistake to put too formalised an interpretation on the work. There is a temptation to project back into *Modire Madraseh* the formalised ideas found in *Gharb*

-
- 98 In the translation by Newton it loses most of its strength. This is partly due to the fact that Newton's translation is not good, and contains many mistakes. However, it would be an injustice to lay all the blame for the failure of that translation on Mr. Newton's errors. The nature of the book and its content make it a difficult work to translate effectively into English, and to communicate the punch, humour and subtlety of the language in English would need extensive footnotes. In the process, the book would thereby lose its vital characteristics of simplicity and verve.
- 99 M.C. Hillman makes this point somewhat ponderously; "The School Principal is a book which seems to have struck a chord of familiarity and recognition in many readers who discover in it a palpable verisimilitude and pieces of their own experience". *Āle Ahmad's Fictional Legacy*, op.cit. p.249. In the introduction to Newton's translation, he observes that the popularity of the book is probably due to "... the feeling of many readers that the book mirrors pieces of truth and real, recognisable situations similar to what they themselves have experienced". (sic) p.26.

Zadegi,¹⁰⁰ and to suggest at least by implication that the book is an intentional fictionalised presentation of the more formalised ideas found in that work, and that the school is a symbol for Iran itself. This would be a mistake. Although Jalâl admits that the book contains references to the general situation at the time,¹⁰¹ the school in Modire Madraseh is not a specific allegory for Iran as a whole. The book is more an immediate response to the situation in the school as he saw it and experienced it, rather than an elaborate attempt to put well worked out criticisms into a fictionalised form.¹⁰² It is a specific example of the frustrations of part of the system, from which he was to later draw wider conclusions.¹⁰³ It is an immediate, emotional response to a real experience. Therein lies its power and its strength. The book lives as a personal, political statement of resistance through realism.

100 This was suggested to me by a writer in Tehrân. Hillman also does this by implication in his introduction to Newton's translation by including a section from Gharb Zadegi. op.cit. pp.13-18. Dr. Irâniyân also falls into this trap. op.cit. pp.104-177.

101 See p. 200 above.

102 As argued above pp.206-7, the book is not a true piece of fiction anyway.

103 Gharb Zadegi. Ravâq n.d.

CHAPTER 7

RESISTANCE AND REALISM : NEFRINE ZAMIN

In form, Nefrin Zamin ('The Cursing of the Land') is similar to the book 'The Headmaster'. Events take place during the course of a school year, and are linked by the presence of the Narrator. The book starts with the arrival of the new teacher, and ends with his departure. In between he is drawn into the course of events. There is no character development, and the work has been variously described as lacking substance, of being essentially an essay,¹ and of being a 'sociological travelogue' or a 'simple sociological study'.² In literary terms, these criticisms are undoubtedly valid, but, as in the case of 'The Headmaster', literary criteria were for Āle Ahmad secondary to the need to communicate a particular political view; a criticism of society. 'The Headmaster', as a political work dealing with the urban experience of Pahlavi westernisation within the framework of the education system, is then complemented by the longer and more comprehensive view of rural society undergoing similar strains contained in 'The Cursing of the Land'.

Nefrine Zamin (The Cursing of the Land) was the last major

-
- 1 R. Barāheni; Qesseh Nevisi. 2nd ed. Tehrān 1969. pp.443-444 also quoted by M.C. Hillman in Āle Ahmad's Fictional Legacy. Iranian Studies LX No.4 Autumn 1976 p.251.
 - 2 Dr. J. Irāniyān; Vāge'iyate Ejtemā'i Va Jahāne Dāstān. Amir Kabir. Tehrān 1358 (1979), p.178.

work by Jalāl to be published before his death in 1969. Although the first chapter was published as early as December 1959/January 1960,³ and two further chapters were also published separately,⁴ the first edition of the novel in complete form did not appear until Dey 1346 (December 1967/January 1968), in an edition of 2000 copies, with illustrations by the painter Hannibāl Alkhās. It was subsequently reprinted in 1357 (1978).

The novel describes the break up of a rural community as a result of the strains imposed upon it by modernisation in general, and Land Reform in particular. It indicates that the purity of rural society, already under seige by the forces of modernisation and technology, is tainted beyond redemption by the particular injunctions of the Land Reform Law of January 1962. The novel is set in a fictional village during the course of a school year between late September 1962, and late May 1963.

Before the law of 1962, rural affairs in Iran were dominated by the landlord-peasant relationship which, although it took a variety of forms throughout the country, was usually based on a crop sharing agreement. The system was inefficient in terms of agricultural production, and insecure in terms of the needs of the villagers. There had previously been several attempts to amend the landholding system in Iran, including modifications to the crop sharing system in 1939 and 1947, various distributions of khaliseh (crown lands) from 1942,

3 Under the title 'Vorud Beh Deh'. Andisheh Va Honar, Dey Māh 1338 (December/January 1960).

4 'Mo'alem Va Darvish', and 'Saghā Va Gorghā'. Ārash 2nd period No.1. Saghā Va Gorghā was also reprinted in Andisheh Va Honar, 5, No.4. pp.374-379.

a reduction of the landlords share of income from the estate, and the setting up of village councils in 1952, and further modifications in 1955 and 1956. All, however, remained largely ineffective, and did nothing to alter the landlord-peasant relationship, nor involve the peasants in the management of their own affairs. During the same period, however, there was an increasing gulf opening between the urban areas and the countryside in terms of amenities, education and expectations. The villagers, who 'lived for the most part in conditions of grinding poverty',⁵ as a result of the introduction of mechanisation, improved communications, and in particular the influence of the radio, were becoming increasingly aware of the contrasts between the town and the village, and of the new values, techniques and expectations which accompanied westernisation.

The need for reform was great. Agricultural production had been declining steadily since 1925, reflecting a decline in irrigation, cultivated land and capital investment. The result was the increasing indebtedness of the peasant, and a steady movement away from the villages to the towns. Facilities in the villages were poor or non existent, yet as the majority of the population still lived in rural areas, Land Reform and the revival of the rural areas was seen as an essential foundation for the economic and social development of Iran.

The Shāh's regime, however, was further encouraged in the

5 A.K.S. Lambton; *Persian Land Reform, 1962-1966*. O.U.P. 1969 p.30. Confirmed by N. Keddie, *The Iranian Village, Before and After Land Reform*, in H. Bernstein (ed.) *Underdevelopment and Development*. Penguin 1973, pp.152-174.

direction of Land Reform by three additional factors. First, by adopting the policy of Land Reform, it took the wind out of the sails of the Left opposition, who had been regularly calling for Land Reform for the previous 20 years.⁶ Secondly, it was under pressure from the I.M.F. and the U.S.A. to implement Land Reform as a necessary economic measure to complement the Economic Stabilisation Programme introduced in 1960 to counter a balance of payments deficit and rapid inflation; and thirdly, it hoped to break the political power of the landowning class, who dominated the Majles, and to bring about the emergence of an independent peasantry who would support the Government.

Following the Law of May 1960, which limited the size of some estates, but remained ineffective, and the resignations of Prime Ministers Egbāl and Sharif Emāmi, 'Ali Amini's cabinet, including the radical teacher's leader Darrakhshesh as Minister of Education, and Hasan Arsanjāni as Minister of Agriculture, implemented a new Land Reform Law on the 9th January 1962. The Law limited holdings to one village; fixed compensation to be paid to the Landlords on the basis of the taxation they had paid; allocated land to peasants cultivating the land; and made membership of a cooperative society a condition for the receipt of land. From the date of the passing of the Law, any measure taken to avoid its provisions was forbidden. Until February 1964, a woman was not permitted to hold land independently. All land which was worked by mechanised means at the date of the passing of

6 See Chapter 2, Gharb Zadegi, above pp.73-74.

the Law, the labour for which was paid a wage in cash or in kind, was excluded from the provisions of the Law.

The Reform was introduced gradually in the country. Starting in east Āzerbāijān, and spreading to the Qazvin district, Gilān, Fārs, and Kordestān, Land Reform officials first collected the relevant information, although 'it is notoriously difficult to arrive at the truth in a Persian village. Long periods of oppression have made the peasants naturally inclined to conceal the truth'.⁷ Land was then distributed to the peasants living in the village who cultivated the land, or their heirs; or to agricultural labourers receiving a share of the crop, or cash; or to people who volunteered for agricultural work.

On the 8th January 1963, the National Congress of Peasants was held in Tehrān, attended by 4700 peasants drawn mainly from the Cooperative Societies. The Shāh addressed the conference, announced the 6 point referendum to be held on the abolition of the Landlord - peasant regime; the nationalisation of forests; the sale of shares in Government factories to landowners as compensation; profit sharing for workers in factories; reform of the electoral law; and the creation of a Literary Corps.

The second stage of the Land Reform was announced on the 17th January 1963, although not implemented until February 1965. It applied to villages not subject of purchase under stage 1, and stated that landowners could rent the land to occupying peasants for cash rent; or sell to the occupying peasants by mutual agreement; or divide the land between

7 A.K.S. Lambton. op.cit. p.96.

himself and the peasants in the same proportion as the crop was divided under the existing crop sharing agreement.

Problems with the Land Reform were many. In addition to uneven application throughout the country, the difficulty of obtaining accurate information and the problem of avoidance through either tranference to relatives or mechanisation of part of the land, perhaps the most serious criticism was that as the intention was to create an independent peasantry, the chief beneficiaries were those who lived in the village and cultivated the land. Thus between 40-50% of the peasantry (agricultural labourers) did not receive any land.⁸ In addition, landlords, if they lived in the area, were able to impede the Land Reform, and in some cases stir up and create faction in the villages.⁹

According to the Law of the 9th January, membership of a Cooperative Society was made a condition of the receipt of land. Peasants were invited to form a society; they were offered shares in proportion to the amount of their property as assessed by the relevant official, and the peasants appointed an executive committee. The Cooperatives were to provide credit and management functions such as provision of agricultural machinery; pesticides and fertilizers; clothing; foodstuffs, loans; and the storage, transport and sale of the produce of members. In 1963, the Central Organisation of Rural Cooperatives was formed to supervise the Cooperative Societies. However, 'because of the speed with

8 N. Keddie; *Stratification, Social Control and Capitalism in; Rural Politics and Social Change in the Middle East* ed. R.T. Antoun and I. Harik, Indiana University Press. 1972, p.389.

9 A.K.S. Lambton, *op.cit.* pp.125-129.

which Land Reform was carried out at the beginning, there was little opportunity to educate the peasants in the meaning and purposes of cooperation before the cooperative societies were set up'.¹⁰

Āle Ahmad was convinced of the importance of rural society as a guarantor of Iranian traditional cultural values threatened by desecration by western values. He felt that the rural base of society preserved a traditional way of life which should not be destroyed. Thus his was primarily an emotional and conservative concern for rural society. His view of the village was an ideal, reflecting his desire to return to his Iranian roots in the face of the disorder of urban, westernised life;

".. and in this anarchy which we have in practice; in this chaos; in this nihilism; return to Mother Earth (bâz gasht beh âb o khâk) is the most necessary thing'.¹¹

Beyond this core of an ideal, however, he was equally convinced of the need for Land Reform, for the modernisation of

-
- 10 A.K.S. Lambton. op.cit. p.301. On Land Reform generally, see A.K.S. Lambton, op.cit. N. Keddie, op.cit. A.K.S. Lambton, Land Reform and the Rural Cooperatives, in E. Yar Shater, Iran Faces the '70's. Praeger 1972, pp.5-42. M.R. Pahlavi, The White Revolution, 1967. Tehrân. J. Bharier, Economic Development in Iran 1900-1970. OUP 1971. H.F. Farmayan, Politics during the '60's, in Yar Shater, op.cit. pp.88-116. J.A. Bill. Modernisation and Reform from above, the Case of Iran, Journal of Politics 32 February 1970. pp.19-40. H. Katuzian, The Political Economy of Modern Iran, MacMillan 1981, Chapter 15. H. Katuzian, The Agrarian Question in Iran, World Employment Programme Research Working Paper, International Labour Office, 1981.
- 11 Goftogu Bâ Jalâl Āle Ahmad, Andisheh Va Honar 5, No.4. p.392.

agriculture, and the improvement of facilities and services to the villages.¹² He was opposed to the Land Reform as introduced by the government on the grounds that it was incomplete; failed to provide the necessary education and facilities to encourage and support it, and, above all, because it created a class of small landowners (khordemâlekin) who were obstacles to efficient agriculture and dispossessed a large number of agricultural labourers. He wrote;

"The land distribution as it is to be performed with the object of creating a petty landowning system is already outdated. This form of land distribution will be the greatest obstacle to mechanised agriculture. Agricultural technology cannot cope with the petty landowning system, nor can petty landowners afford agricultural technology ... As long as the villages are inaccessible and without electricity, as long as there is not even one central repair shop for agricultural machinery in every 30 or 40 villages, we will not have mechanised agriculture. So long as there are petty landowners and so long as there are no training classes for mechanics in every village school, technology will be alien to the villagers, and will cause nothing but destruction, disturbance and disruption'.¹³

He confirmed this view in Dar Khedmat Va Khiyânate Rowshanfekrân, where he stated that the Land Reform produced a class of small landowners who were supporters of the Government, and had close relations with the towns. Meanwhile, many villagers became dispossessed, moved to the towns, and joined the unemployed, and became corrupted by urban luxuries and

¹² See Chapter 2, Gharb Zadegi above p. 62.

¹³ Gharb Zadegi, pp.162-3. Translated by Dr. A.R. Navâbpur, in A Study of Recent Persian Prose Fiction, with Special Reference to the Social Background. Ph.D. thesis, Durham University, 1981, p.264.

facilities which were not available in the villages.¹⁴

'The Cursing of the Land' then, communicates in the form of a novel, the destruction of Āle Ahmad's rural ideal. It is a lament to the simplicity of the ideal of 'bāz gasht beh āb o khāk', and a bitter denunciation of the way in which westernisation, modernisation and government interference acts not to complement and benefit traditional society, but to destroy it.

Although 'The Cursing of the Land' is essentially fiction, (the village 'Hasanābād, or Hosseynābād, or 'Aliābād, it's obvious, the name is not important; a village like all villages',¹⁵ is deliberately unspecific and represents a 'typical' Iranian rural community), much of the atmosphere and many of the descriptions are naturally taken from Jalāl's experiences of rural areas. In addition, the framework of the Land Reform Law and accompanying legislation is on the whole accurately portrayed, and by employing the technique of including radio news reports into the novel, the reader is given a wider perspective of the events of 1962-1963 which gives the novel a factual dimension.

The description of the environment of the village bears many similarities to the villages of Sagzābād and Ebrahimābād described in the monograph Tāt Neshinhāye Boluke Zahrā. The hill outside the village in 'The Cursing of the Land' bears a similarity to the two hills called 'Kushkak' described in

14 Dar Khedmat Va Khiyānate Rowshanfekrān. Enteshārāte Khwārazmi, 1978. 1; p.78-80.

15 Nefrine Zamin. Ravaq. 2nd ed. 1357 (1978) p.10.

the monograph;¹⁶ the building of a 'mordeshurkhâneh',¹⁷ is reminiscent of the one built in 1946 in Sagzâbâd 'by the efforts of my father and brother in law, and by the hands of the villagers',¹⁸ before which the villagers had to wash corpses in the open streams running through the middle of the village. The school in Sagzâbâd, like the school in 'The Cursing of the Land', had a small field attached to it cultivated by the pupils,¹⁹ and the village water powered mill, owned by the villagers, bears a resemblance to the description of the famed mill of Sagzâbâd.²⁰ Jalâl's familiarity with the work of a moqanni (qanât digger) described in the novel, is reflected in references to the art of the qanât digging gleaned from a Yazdi moqanni in 1958.²¹ On the wider issue of disturbances in villages due to the introduction of technology and the implementation of Land Reform, Âle Ahmad has observed that he kept a file of reports on such disturbances,²² and by the incorporation of news reports in the novel the reader is informed of actual events such as the murder of a Land Reform official in Firuzâbâd in November 1962, the Peasants Congress of the 8th January 1963,²³ and the resignation of the Minister of Agriculture Hasan Arsanjâni on 10th March 1963.²⁴

16 Tâtnezhinhâye Boluke Zahrâ. Dânesht 1337 (1958) p.21 and Nefrine Zamin, op.cit. p.50.

17 A building for the washing and laying out of corpses.

18 Tâtnezhinhâ, op.cit. p.22, and Nefrine Zamin, op.cit. p.146.

19 Tâtnezhinhâ, op.cit. p.28; Nefrine Zamin, op.cit. p.217.

20 Tâtnezhinhâ, op.cit. p.34; Nefrine Zamin, op.cit. p.69.

21 Safar be Shahre Bâdgirhâ, in Arzyâbiye Shetâbzadeh, Amir Kabir 1357 (1978), p.159.

22 Gharb Zadegi, op.cit. p.92.

23 Nefrine Zamin, op.cit. p.191.

24 Ibid. p.207.

Jalāl's ideal of 'bāzgasht beh āb o khāk', - the refuge provided by Mother Earth and Nature, created for him an ideal view of the village as a social unit which is revealed in some of the more lyrical descriptive passages of 'The Cursing of the Land'. Although he is aware of the villager's dependence upon the seasons, and represents village life in winter as nasty, brutish and short, his ideal of the interrelated unit functioning in harmony, with a role for everybody, can be clearly observed; Describing the preparations for reaping and gathering the harvest, he observes how everyone, however old or young, takes a useful part. Everyone provides whatever implements and skills they possess;

"In the mornings, the working men went to the fields and by sunrise had breakfasted there. At noon, the women arrived carrying saucepans of soup of their heads and bread and cheese wrapped in cloths tied to their waists ... followed by a complaining child, and carrying water jugs. After a quick lunch they went to work helping the men tying the bundles of cut barley, and then they loaded them up to carry the result of a days work to the threshing floor by sunset ... And when they return at sunset, carrying a load from the harvest field on their shoulders, following a donkey, scythes hanging from their waists and clutching the donkey's saddle on one side, chatting to each other or with a passer by ..." 25

The ideal, however, has been rudely disturbed. On arrival at the village, the Narrator, the new schoolmaster, finds a village where the contrasts between the traditional rural way of life and the urban, western values and modernisation are already pronounced. The village is in the process

of losing its rural isolation. A road connects the village with the neighbouring town; the radio increases awareness of another lifestyle and expectations of material wellbeing; electricity is provided by a generator; the old water mill is replaced by a motorised mill; qanàts are threatened by mechanically drilled pump operated wells.

These changes threaten the established pattern of relationships in the village, and are the cause of divisions amongst the villagers. The main characters, in the village, the Headmaster, the landowner's agent (the Mobàsher), the landowner Bibi, her son, the Darvish, and various characters such as Fazlollah, 'Eynollah and Nasrollah ('a village this small and so full of divine qualities and favours?!' observes the Narrator)²⁶ are divided amongst themselves, and, in various combinations, form alliances. Thus the contrasts and changes set faction against faction in efforts to benefit from the changes; generation against generation in terms of the values accompanying the changes; and create an atmosphere of suspicion and self interest.

The contrasts and divisions are aggravated and brought to a climax by the hopes, expectations and ultimate disappointments engendered by the issue of Land Reform. The community finally destroys itself as the link between the old system and the new disappears on the death of the landowner Bibi.

The Narrator plays an idealised role in the novel. Coming in from the outside, he is at first a stranger; an alien. However, he becomes involved in village affairs, and acts as an intermediary, and becomes accepted by the villagers. He is, however, unable to prevent the final break up of the community,

26 Ibid. p.52.

after which he leaves.

As a result of the increased communication between the town and the village, and the influx of technology and westernisation, the contrast between the town and the village becomes more apparent. Āle Ahmad presents modernisation as pressing in upon the community and disrupting rural unity, harmony and traditional skills, which are in retreat in the face of opportunistic development which ignores the rural foundation of the society which it is supposed to benefit, and, indeed, corrupts it.

The Darvish is a representative of traditional Iranian values. He lives in the Mosque in the warm weather, and in the tea house when the weather turns cold. He complains that none pays attention to him any longer; that the villagers are no longer interested in the tales he relates. He claims that he only remained in the village at the request of the landowner, as the village mulla had left in protest against the Land Reform. He sadly observes that everyone now listens to the radio, and pays no attention to the mulla, nor to him. He laments the dissipation of the old community, saying;

"The radio says that the town has become utopia
(shahre paryān) - and they go to the town to
shovel money" 27

Mirzā 'Amu, the assistant teacher in the government school similarly resents the disruptions caused by modernisation. As the uncle of the present Headmaster and formerly in charge of the village maktab, he criticises the disruptive effect

27 Ibid. p.22.

of the new government school, built three years previously on the site of the old village cemetery according to government specifications. He complains that the new school teaches different values and encourages the breakup of the community;

".. we who ran the maktabas knew how to keep the children on this same land. But you tell me which of these children of your (government) school will stay in the village?" 28

Traditional skills under siege are also represented in the character of the Yazdi moqanni, who, like the Darvish and Mirzâ 'Amu, regrets the disruptive effect of urban or westernised values and technology, and is equally displaced by them;

"Now none digs a well with a pick ... they use a machine and make a hole with a drill ... Since the time that I opened my eyes, this pick has been in my hands ... I know the veins of water like the veins of a sheep ... Which engineer could walk once around a village and say dig here or there? ... geologists come, hydrologists come, meteorologists come - and out of every three wells they dig, one gives water". 29

Indeed, technology has raped the land;

If you cut a vein in the hand, or bleed sacrificially, blood comes out slowly. Like a qanât ... but if you cut a man's throat - what? ... his life pours out with his blood, like these motor wells. The body of this earth ... does not have so much blood that it can answer all these wells". 30

28 Ibid. p.29.

29 Ibid. p.128.

30 Ibid. p.128-129.

The isolation of the traditionalists is emphasised by their firm belief in values which appear outdated in the face of western values. Mirzâ 'Amu refuses to drink the water from the village qanât. Many years previously, when the qanât was dug, the flow of water from the qanât of the neighbouring village Gatteh Deh was reduced from 7 sangs to 2 sangs.³¹ As a result, bloodshed occurred between the two communities, and

"when, over water, blood is shed, the land is cursed".³²

Consequently, Mirzâ 'Amu viewed the village water as stolen, and thus forbidden (haram). He and a group of contemporaries wrote to Najaf for advice, and received the following;

"Leaving the land is abandoning a primary obligation, (tarke owlâ). Leaving water is like shedding blood. Cooking with it is disapproved of (makruh). For watering domestic animals and trees there is no obstacle. For washing with it, you must pay redemption. Knowledge is with God".³³

Since then, Mirzâ 'Amu had drunk only âbe neysân.³⁴

These traditionalists are portrayed by Âle Ahmad as being displaced by those concerned to introduce the new values and technology into the village community. The landowner's son,

31 A sang is a measurement of water.

32 Ibid. p.179.

33 Ibid. p.180.

34 Rainwater, collected usually after the first few drops of rain have fallen, and thus is very pure. A rare substance in areas of low rainfall.

a lawyer based in the town, is chief link between the town, the government, westernisation and disruption of the rural community.

The contrast between the urban and rural life and values is apparent on the introduction of a motor driven mill and a generator at the instigation of the son and the Mobàsher. Despite the fact that there is an adequate water mill in the village, the motorised mill is brought in with all the trappings of the government controlled media and westernisation. It arrives on a lorry, accompanied by the son of the landowner, a company representative, a translator, a reporter, photographer, and the western dressed grandchildren of the landlord, and last of all, a small boy in a cowboy outfit. The villagers, however, receive the new technology in a traditional manner, with the proprietor of the tea house spreading the incense of wild rue to avoid the evil eye, while the villagers praise God and Mohammad, and the workers shout 'Allah, Mohammad, 'Ali' as they labour to set the machinery on its platform.³⁵

The landowner's son considers the needs, wants and beliefs of the villagers as irrelevant. He declares such westernisation is inevitable, and that Iran, as an oil dominated economy, should export oil and import everything else. In such a climate;

"A water mill is antiquated. Mud walls are ugly. Weaving carpets is supposed to be unhygienic. We must buy company goods to become civilised. When they take oil, they give machines and engines. And when the country is full of motors and machines then again they will take oil, and give us wheat

35 Ibid. p.78.

and meat". 36

For the landlord's son, life is perfectly simple;

"The motive power of the world is machines. And the motive power of machines is oil". 37

Iran, therefore, possessing large reserves of oil, does not need an economic infrastructure, and does not need the villages. Iran was to be protected from economic reality by oil filled cushions, and the rural areas were no longer needed.

Inevitably the effect of the introduction of technology spreads throughout the village. New values are upheld, as technology becomes a status symbol;

".. and beside the square, a 200 candle power lamp burnt on top of a tall post, but also they gave electricity to the Mosque, the School and the Hamâm, and of course to the landowner's house, and those of the Mobâsher, the village headman, and the heads of the farming groups (sarbonehâ). And over the doors of each of these, they'd put up a lamp ... Since the generator had been set up, the village grocer ... in addition to the kerosene station which he had, added bulbs and wire and insulators, switches and plugs to his grocery wares". 38

A new well is sunk in the village; a tractor comes to plough the land; a new road is laid to the neighbouring village Gatteh Deh, while the radio talks as if 'the land has become a machine, for which you turn a key and it goes'.³⁹

36 Ibid. p.81.

37 Ibid. p.85.

38 Ibid. p.199.

39 Ibid. p.207.

But the new technology, however, is not assimilated into the community;

".. in this way, something was being added to the village with separate criteria and a separate life for itself. Something like a parasite sat at the foot of a tree, and getting its living from its water and earth and manure. But the village itself was still the same as always. And the people too". 40

The increasing pressure of westernisation and technology and the awareness this brings to the rural community of wider options and opportunities, deepens the divisions already found in the tight-knit social unit. Technology does not work for the benefit of the community as a whole; it disrupts established relationships, as individuals seek to benefit personally, if necessary at the expense of others.

The village alliances are complicated. The urban - rural division is paramount, and overlays existing factions. The central division is between the Headmaster of the School;

".. a local; everything about him shouted it. Rosary in hand; middle height, wrists as thin as a cane; a large head and a hat".

and the Mobàsher, a man of;

"Completely good appearance - one of those who in town they follow from door to door as a leader. 'Chapeau' on his head, and trousers pressed under a mattress". 41

The rivalry between the two men has existed from their youth,

40 Ibid. pp.293-4.

41 Ibid. p.12.

when the Mobàsher arrived in the village from the town, and prevented the Headmaster from assaulting a girl.⁴² The rivalry subsequently continued as the increase in the Mobàsher's power in the village threatened the interests of the Headmaster's family.

The Headmaster is allied to the landowner's son. The lawyer's classmate at school became the Minister of Education,⁴³ and the Headmaster obtained his job through the intervention of the lawyer.⁴⁴

The lawyer, however, is in turn opposed to his mother, the landowner, who accuses him of extracting income from the village for his westernised wife to waste on luxuries in the town.⁴⁵ The lawyer claims that the income from the village is insignificant and only sufficient to pay for the education of his brother abroad, and that is out of consideration for his mother that the land is not sold off.⁴⁶ The landowner, Bibi, is in turn suspicious of the Mobàsher, and, in order to control him, makes him her confidante, and married him in a 'sigheye mahramiyyat' form,⁴⁷ an alliance which misfires as it has made the villagers suspicious of her in addition to the Mobàsher. Underlaying these factions, there is a division within the village as a whole between the older and younger generation.

With the issues of the motorised mill, and the tractor, Āle Ahmad indicates how the village factions are altered and multiplied by the effect of new technology, and that the

42 Ibid. p.117.

43 Ibid. p.37.

44 Ibid. p.24.

45 Ibid. p.92.

46 Ibid. p.85.

47 A relationship which allows a degree of familiarity which stops short of sexual or affectionate relations.

key response is not concern for the community as a whole, but for self interest.

The Headmaster, although allied to the landowner's son, is opposed to the motorised mill. He defends the existing water mill on the grounds that it works perfectly adequately, and that there is not enough work in the village for two mills. However, it transpires that the family of the Headmaster, owns the largest share in the water mill, and thus he is economically threatened by the motorised mill. Bibi's son, however, by introducing the motorised mill, is not only encouraging the spread of mechanised agriculture, but also stands to profit from the payments which will have to be made by the villagers for its use.

The issue of the tractor is perhaps of more general interest to the villagers. At the beginning of the novel, the situation in the neighbouring village of Amirâbâd is discussed, and the response of the villagers present reveal their attitudes, prejudices and interests.

The landowner of Amirâbâd introduced a tractor to plough his own lands, and to rent to the villagers for their land at 12 tomans an hour. The tractor driver was a stranger, and ploughed the borders between the villager's land, thus obliterating the boundaries. Disputes resulted, and the villagers were arrested.⁴⁸

The response to this issue in the Narrator's village is varied. A Sarboneh states that these kinds of quarrels are inevitable if machines are brought onto the land, as they are unnatural. The Headmaster's brother claims that it was

48 Ibid. p.30ff.

wrong of the landlord to charge the villagers rent for use of the tractor; another Sarboneh regrets the displacement of beasts of burden if tractors are brought into use; the village headman claims that the dispute got out of hand because the headman of Amirâbâd was inefficient and weak; the Headmaster states that the dispute arose through lack of education, as the village has no school.

Thus in 'The Cursing of the Land', Āle Ahmad portrays technology of having a negative effect on the village community, of exacerbating and creating divisions, and as being appropriated by a section of that community for the benefit of a few.

The question of Land Reform heightens the already existing contrasts and finally deepens the divisions to the point where the community is destroyed.

The villagers slowly realise that, despite all the propaganda concerning Land Reform, their expectations of receiving land under the first stage of the Reform are to be thwarted by the simple trick of avoidance of stage 1, perpetrated by the family of the landowner in collusion with the Mobâsher.

It has already been observed that avoidance was common by means of mechanisation or transfer of land to relatives.⁴⁹ The landowner's family avoided redistribution by the same means. First they converted the land from 'melke arbâbi' (land owned by a landlord and so subject to stage 1 of the Reform) to land owned by a 'khorde mâlek' (small, or petty

49 See p. 239 above.

landowner), by selling ten jaribs⁵⁰ of the dry farming land to a chicken farmer, who was to mechanise the land and employ village labour for a cash wage. The news is announced at a village meeting held at Bibi's house to apportion the dry farming areas. Bibi, calling for the villagers' attention, announces;

".. last month I made a deal. I sold 10 jaribs of the dry farming land to this man (and she indicated a bespectacled man with grey hair who had come to the village with Bibi's son in the morning with the motorised mill). It was arranged that he should come and open a chicken farm. He'll have nothing to do with your water and cultivation. He'll sink his own well, and take labourers from the village". 51

Secondly, Bibi transfers the land. The Land Reform official from the Land Registry confirms that the land is 'khorde mālèk' and not 'melke arbābi', and is thus excluded from the first stage of Land Reform. He reveals that a month before the enactment of the Land Reform, Bibi transferred one dāng of her property to the Mobāsher, and 20 days later transferred 2 dāngs each to her two sons, retaining one dāng for herself.⁵²

Thus the villagers are denied the fundamental benefit of Land Reform - that of redistribution of land. They see 'their' land being taken away by a machination involving the landowner's family, and, worse, strangers in the shape of the chicken farmer and the Mobāsher. Their expectations remain unfulfilled, and cynicism prevails;

50 A measure of area varying in size. In Tehrān it is usually 1000 square metres.

51 Ibid. p.103.

52 A dāng is one sixth of any piece of real estate.

"Is it redistribution of land or changing the landlord?" 53

asks one of the villagers.

The formation of a Cooperative Society in the village, however, although greeted by the villagers with incomprehension at first, is also treated with a degree of optimism. In contrast to the issue of the redistribution of land, which seemed to the villagers to be a plot, and if carried out would have meant the paying of instalments to the government, and the creation of debts, the formation of a Cooperative Society, with government backing and the availability of government funds and grants, appeared to offer greater possibilities of advancement. In short, 'the issue of Cooperative Societies smelt of money'.⁵⁴

But the arrival of Land Reform officials in the village highlights the contrast between the urban and the rural ways of life. The officials, staying at the village school, consist in an engineer, who drives rapidly around the area in a landrover, the Registration official, descended from the Qājārs and addicted to opium, and a Land Reform advisor (moravvej). The advisor has to establish the amount of property each villager possesses in order to apportion the number of shares in the Cooperative Society. Again, we see that modernisation is imposed upon the village - that the criteria used in evaluating rural progress are essentially western, and that little or no notice is taken of local conditions.

The Narrator asks the official;

53 Ibid. p.212.

54 Ibid. p.264.

".. and if the villagers of an area don't want to form a Cooperative Society? Don't want to? You are dreaming. It is compulsory. Now the period of choice is over". 55

The gulf between the official and the villagers, or between the urban and the rural, is enormous. He;

"continually criticised the village houses for being made of mud, and for not having gabled rooves, and why don't the villagers themselves use towels, and why don't they press their clothes, and why do they sleep on the ground and eat with their hands ..." 56

As a result of his domineering approach, and due to the inherent suspicion of the villagers of government officials, the advisor is unable to obtain correct answers to the questionnaires concerning the details of the villagers' property. They give false answers, and it is only through the intervention of the Narrator that the correct answers are obtained.

The issue of Cooperatives also increases the divisions within the village society. Although initially the nature of the Cooperative Society is the subject of much speculation;

"No-one knew anything about it". 57

and every day the Narrator is asked several times about it;

55 Ibid. p.269.

56 Ibid. p.278. Jalâl similarly criticised members of the literary corps on the grounds of going into the villages with urban values which were irrelevant to the peasants. Kârnameye Seh Sâleh, Ketâbe Zamân, n.d. p.169.

57 Nefrine Zamin, op.cit. p.260.

"Mr. Teacher, what does 'village cooperation' mean?
 In my opinion it means the villagers
 working together, like taking the top of the
 milk, or working together at harvest.
 Then up until now we were village cooperation?
 You weren't. You had. O.K., names change". 58

the reality of it maintains the same power structure in the village, and thus again expectations are frustrated. The executive committee is elected, and the Mobàsher, the Headmaster, the village Headman, and six Sarboneh find themselves in control. While individuals are to an extent content to dream of things they will purchase with money from the Society, the reinforcing of the existing power structure in the village is not lost upon the younger generation. Yadollah, the Headmaster's younger brother, angrily says to one of the older generation;

"You are the Cooperative. Did you imagine that they would come and make me the Cooperative? or Nasrollah? or the village shepherd? Certainly it's the Mobàsher (who controls it)". 59

The response of the villagers to westernisation, modernisation and Land Reform is, then, disastrous. The innovations increase contrasts, deepen divisions, and act as catalysts in the eventual destruction of the community. The village is rife with rumour concerning the avoidance of Stage 1 of the Land Reform and the roles of the Mobàsher and of the chicken farmer, and it is only a matter of time before rumour generates action. First 'Eynollah, acting on behalf of the Headmaster's

58 Ibid. p.260-261.

59 Ibid. p.264.

faction, disables the generator.⁶⁰ In retaliation the trees in the orchard of the Headmaster's family are cut down,⁶¹ which leads the younger generation of the Headmaster's faction to attack the chicken farm, only to be repulsed by the Mobàsher, supported by a Gendarme.

The denouement, however, occurs on the death of Bibi, when the villagers make another attack on the chicken farm. The Mobàsher, the village Headman, and the Darvish attempt to stop them. The Mobàsher shot Fazlollah in the leg, and Fazlollah in turn shot and killed the Mobàsher with a pistol he had obtained from the town. Fighting broke out, and 15 villagers were arrested.⁶² The community is finally destroyed.

The Narrator's role in the novel represents Àle Ahmad's own view of the intellectual in a traditional society. Recognising the inevitability and necessity of reform and modernisation, yet understanding and sympathising with a traditional rural society, the Narrator views himself as a broker, a mediator and a leader in the mingling of the modern and the traditional. The Narrator is, of course, Àle Ahmad himself and through the Narrator's role in 'The Cursing of the Land', Àle Ahmad indicates the way forward.

The Narrator's view of modernisation is the same as found in the book *Gharb Zadegi*. He recognises the inevitability of it; sees the necessity for it, and views it as something

60 Ibid. p.196.

61 Ibid. p.209. A.K.S. Lambton remarked on such a 'fantastic situation' actually occurring near Arāk. *Persian Land Reform*, op.cit. p.129.

62 Ibid. pp.303-305.

which, if treated in the right way, can be of great benefit. The reality of the way in which modernisation is manipulated for the benefit of the few (the government and its supporters) and the indiscriminate worship of machines and western values, however, are angrily observed.

The Narrator, in discussion with the Darvish, relates an incident concerning a swan coming to a school in Māzandarān where he was previously Headmaster. The swan, representing the potentially beneficial aspects of modernisation, is captured by the children. No-one, however, knows what the creature is, nor what to do with it. The Narrator tells them, and states that the swan represents good luck. The teachers want to eat the bird, but are prevented from doing so by the Narrator. The school janitor offers to buy it for 50 tomans, and they agree to this proposition, arranging to have a feast on the proceeds. However, the military and government officials arrive, and capture the bird, having been tipped off by the Janitor.

Thus the Narrator reemphasises Āle Ahmad's own view that the beneficial aspects of modernisation (the swan) are high-jacked for the benefit of the regime and its supporters. As a result of the incident, the janitor is appointed Doorkeeper of the Palace, while the Narrator loses his job for telling the truth.⁶³ The Narrator bitterly observes;

"For a lifetime they put it in our heads that the west is paradise on earth. Books say so, teachers say so. You, a student, and they tell you that if you are first in your class you will go to the west. You try. But your father is a postman ...

63 Ibid. pp.60-62.

Inevitably that one wins whose father is chief of a bank, or Director of the Post Office, or Director of the Gendarmerie. And you are left with a wish which becomes a hate ... One day Alexander went to the dark region in search of the Elixir of Life. But now everyone goes after the Elixir of Machines. The dark region was India, but the Elixir of Machines is Europe and America". 64

Initially, the Narrator, an intellectual from the town, is an outsider in the village. On his arrival, he is viewed with suspicion, where even the knot holes in the village trees appear to be watching him. On the face of it, he is an irrelevance;

"I don't have water, nor land, and nor do I earn my living from the land. Nor will I stay for eternity". 65

The Narrator contrasts his position with that of the Darvish, whose roots he sees are in the land,⁶⁶ and who has a useful social function to perform;

"I saw that it was he who was in the right place, and it was I who was superfluous. He slept in the mosque, and I in a disused cemetery. It is true that the mosque is empty, but tomorrow is Ramadân, and the day after is Moharram, and all this place will take on life and the air will fill with the breath of people and the sound of their activity". 67

The Narrator represents an alien culture;

64 Ibid. p.59.

65 Ibid. p.48.

66 Ibid. p.64.

67 Ibid. p.56.

"I came to this small village on a lorry. I came from the town. From a town which always compares itself with the land of the swan not with these villages. And no longer bears any resemblance to these villages ... Even on this land, I have no place". 68

However, the Narrator is not prepared to remain an irrelevance. He cannot sit on the sidelines and observe the problems within the village community without becoming involved. He argues with the Darvish in favour of commitment;

"I said; A man who acts must take a side.
He said; Your Darvish says it is not necessary to take a side in every dispute. Take the side of truth.
I said; Inevitably truth is on one of the two sides. It is not in the sky". 69

and becomes involved in village life himself.

Although he believes in commitment, activity and deciding between right and wrong, he is not prepared to be bought by anybody. Consequently, he refuses partisan offers of accommodation in the landowner's castle, he insists on sleeping in the school,⁷⁰ where he will not be indebted to anyone, nor subject to pressure, and is able to maintain his independence. To compensate for his alienation from village society, he decides to dress like a villager, and he abandons shaving, a tie and a collar, for;

".. all these things mean what? Civilisation? or western pretensions? or means of distinction from villagers?" 71

68 Ibid. p.64.
69 Ibid. p.202.
70 Ibid. p.17.
71 Ibid. p.46.

He also ~~also~~ engages in a temporary marriage (sigheh) with a village women, and takes responsibility for her children.⁷²

Rather than concerning himself merely with irrelevant education, he responds to the needs of the villagers, encouraging local people to take part in school activities. He organises the building of a mordeshurkhàneh⁷³ and the cleaning out of the Hamâm ditch,⁷⁴ and involves both the wandering gypsy and the Darvish in taking classes at the school.⁷⁵ He observes that much of his work is like that of a social services official, but;

".. in a village can one remain only a school teacher?"⁷⁶

His involvement in village life reaches a peak when the gypsy is caught by the villagers walking with the fiancée of one of the Headmaster's brothers. The villagers attack the gypsy, and cut off one of his ears. They are prevented from cutting off the other ear by the Narrator, who claims his right to intervene as a responsible citizen with a wife from the village and responsibility for her children.⁷⁷

Subsequently he is accepted into village society. His assimilation is marked by having his back scrubbed in the Hamâm, and by the fact that the village dogs no longer try to attack him.⁷⁸

Following these incidents, he becomes fully involved in

72 Ibid. pp.98-90.

73 Ibid. p.146.

74 Ibid. p.158.

75 Ibid. pp.142-143, p.196.

76 Ibid. p.159.

77 Ibid. p.151.

78 Ibid. pp.161-162.

the course of events in the village. He intervenes to try to present the first attack on the chicken farm,⁷⁹ he attempts to encourage the acceptance of the gypsy's family by the village community as socially useful people,⁸⁰ and he mediates between the Land Reform officials and the villagers, gently persuading them to give the correct information;

"Naneh Kheyri. This poor fellow is an official. It's not his fault. Instead of accepting him, and sending him cream in the morning, I have heard that you have teased him. Will God be pleased? After all, this poor fellow came to this area with hope. He expects to get a bonus. He expects to be promoted".⁸¹

and explaining the subtleties of the Land Reform and the Cooperative Societies.

Thus Āle Ahmad, through the role of the Narrator, is presenting his own view of the role of the responsible, committed and active intellectual. Understanding both modernisation and traditional society, he has a vital role to play as a mediator between the two; in ensuring that westernisation is not imposed from above but that modernisation is introduced on a firm base of traditional society. This approach is to be seen in the final chapter of the novel, concerning the building of a school in the neighbouring village of Amirābād. The Narrator receives instructions from the government to supervise the construction of the school. On the way to the village, he observes building materials for use in the restoration of a Seljug tower in Amirābād.

79 Ibid. p.210.

80 Ibid. p.258 and p.277.

81 Ibid. p.271.

He observes;

"I knew that the Ministry of Education insists that schools are built with bricks (âjor), and the height of the roof should be such and such, and the windows to such a width, and the ceiling beams should be iron and so on". 82

But such specifications are irrelevant in a village where the materials are unavailable, and it is a matter of having a school or not. So he suggests to the villagers;

"Cement and mortor are in the tower. We will make an official requisition and take it. This afternoon, four workers are necessary. Up to one metre build with stone. The rest with sun dried bricks (khesht). There is a master builder now in the village". 83

Thus modernisation, in the form of a new school, is introduced into Amirâbâd on a firm traditional base. Local materials, built by local workers with the involvement of the villagers themselves. The Narrator, the responsible intellectual, leads in an initiatory and supervisory manner.

The novel 'The Cursing of the Land' communicates Āle Ahmad's view of the corruption of a rural ideal by modernisation and Land Reform. It shows how the imposition of new criteria and values has aggravated and created divisions within rural society, as the benefits were expropriated by the few at the expense of the community as a whole. Through

82 Ibid. p.299.

83 Ibid. p.299.

the role of the Narrator, Āle Ahmad indicates his ideal view of the intellectual; as committed to the society in which he lives, and prepared to involve himself in that society on its own level, and not according to the criteria he has learned from the west. During the 10 years which elapsed between the publication of 'The Headmaster' and 'The Cursing of the Land', a perceptible difference emerges in the Narrator's approach to the society in which he lives. In 'The Headmaster', Jalāl was making a personal political statement; an angry condemnation of the system. The Headmaster is aggressive, cynical, and through his resignation he symbolises a total rejection of the system. 'The Cursing of the Land', however, has a different atmosphere. Although it still reflects the fighting, committed Āle Ahmad, taking sides and becoming involved, there is an undertow of discouragement in the novel; perhaps a recognition that the system works in a certain way and that it is beyond his power alone to change it. In contrast to the Headmaster, there is no question of the Narrator in 'The Cursing of the Land' resigning, of pulling out in protest. He no longer has anywhere else to go. So he intermediates where he can, modifies where he can, observes, but never condones. His powerlessness is apparent in the face of the final village disputes. He can do nothing to prevent the break up of the community. He remains on the sidelines while the villagers fight, and in the end, can only drive away in the manner in which he came - on a lorry, back to the town.

CONCLUSION

"It's Tehrân - and going up from Pahlavi Avenue in a car, I passed through the lines of tanks and soldiers - in absolute silence, as if there had been a coup. From Pahlavi Square onwards, the lights are on, and there is a line of policemen, all in uniform ... short, with round wide faced, flat noses and proud necks ... looking at me contemptuously. I stop in order to buy papers, cigarettes, or to look into a cafe, and then I start again. This time I'm giving a lift to some people. I go along a bad road - mountainous, - and once I take the wrong road. Then I arrive (but to where? it's not clear)". 1

Jalâl Âle Ahmad returned to a town where he was an outsider. A town dominated by the Pahlavi ethos of rapid, indiscriminate westernisation; of alien cultural values; of opportunism bred in the hothouse of a booming oil based economy. A dissident voice, he had swum increasingly against the tide of oppression and upheld the virtues of a love of traditional Iranian values, honesty and personal integrity.

Jalâl had lived in an Iran under pressure, - a country where the contrasts between the urban and the rural, and the western and the traditional, were becoming increasingly pronounced, and were contributing to a sense of social dislocation. Jalâl himself experienced the effects of the social dislocation and, as a writer, was primarily concerned with communicating its' effects and suggesting ways the consequences could be avoided.

Coming from a severely religious background, Jalâl was

1 Âle Ahmad, Notes of a dream, Keyhân, 14th September 1358 (1979).

brought up in a traditional area of Tehrân, and, as the son of a locally respected religious leader, in a position of relative privilege. In his youth, he was influenced strongly by the rigidity of his father's religion, and after brushing with the reality of life as a religious student in Najaf, returned to Tehrân and at the time of political freedom following the abdication of Rezâ Shâh in 1941, became involved in politics. Initially involved through religious societies, his political activities widened when he attended the University of Tehrân, and in 1944, he joined the Tudeh Party with a group of friends.

His political experiences between 1944 and 1953, although illuminating, were not successful. He reached the middle level of leadership of the Tudeh Party, but left in January 1948 as an active member of the Enshe'âb, only to see his new political grouping crumble into nothing within two weeks, attacked by the former hero of the progressive left, the Soviet Union. The events of the Enshe'âb, however, had a lasting effect on Jalâl. On the one hand they gave him an insight into the realities of politics, and on the other hand gave him a lifelong friendship with his political mentor, Khalil Maleki.

Jalâl's subsequent political experiences were equally disappointing. His experiences in the Toiler's Party and the Third Force served only to drive him further away from political party activity, an inclination which was given concrete form with the coup d'etat of August 1953, and the subsequent political repression.

Following the coup, Jalāl changed direction. During the 1950's and early 1960's, he developed his critique of contemporary Iranian society, and, in the increasingly repressive political climate, he became more isolated. In the period of relative freedom of expression between 1961 and 1963, which coincided with the death of his father, the emergence of Āyatollah Khomeyni as a leader of the religious opposition, and a general debate amongst some urban intellectuals and some of the religious authorities, on the issue of cooperation between those two groups, Jalāl added a religious dimension to his critique of Iranian society, which served to increase his isolation from his former fellow activists. Nonetheless, towards the end of his life, Jalāl was, within Iran, a famous figure, with a considerable following amongst the younger generation of students and intellectuals. He was, in the late 1960's, continually harrassed by the security forces, followed daily by a SĀVĀK agent, and required to attend SĀVĀK Headquarters once a month, where he was regularly threatened with exile.

Jalāl was in no sense a political theorist. The political ✓ background to his critique of contemporary Iranian society contained in the book *Gharb Zadegi* was inherited from a group of socialists surrounding Khalil Maleki, and thus lacks originality. However, the strength of the work lies in its' cultural orientation, in his portrayal of a desecrated society measuring itself not against the adoption of necessary and inevitable modernisation built upon the solid basis of Iranian cultural values, but against a purely western idea of progress and modernisation. In the Iranian context, this too often

took the form of pseudo modernism, where the trappings of modernisation were held to be more significant than the reality. In *Gharb Zadegi*, he castigated this characteristic of Pahlavi Iran, and heavily criticised both the west and the Iranian government for the roles which they played in the exploitation of Iranian resources and the Iranian people. In turn, Jalāl advocated a selective approach to modernisation, one which preserved the cultural values of an essentially rural and religious Iran, yet which allowed for the introduction of modernisation provided it was built upon the existing society, and did not destroy it.

Religion, for Jalāl, was a matter of practicality. Although he possessed a degree of spiritual awareness, he was not religious in an orthodox sense, and indeed attacked the religious authorities as reactionary fanatics to the same extent that he criticised westernised Iranian intellectuals for opportunism. *Dar Khedmat Va Khiyānate Rowshanfekrān*, although displaying similar theoretical, historical and academic weaknesses to those found in *Gharb Zadegi*, nonetheless advocates an alliance of the Iranian intellectual and the religious authorities in opposition to the development of the Iranian society effectively described in *Gharb Zadegi*. Religion, for Jalāl, was above all a dam in the face of indiscriminate westernisation, a cultural bond which would act to preserve Iranian cultural values threatened by western cultural values accompanying modernisation, and a way of mobilising popular support against the government. For Jalāl, the power of Shiism as a cultural and social force was not to be

underestimated, especially in view of the ineffectiveness of Jalāl's own generation of political activists and intellectuals. As Stendhal wrote;

"Fifty thousand priests repeat the same words on the day appointed by their leaders, and the common people, who, after all, provide the soldiers, will be more moved by the voice of their priests than by all the little poems in the world". 2

Motivated by a moral force of commitment and the personal integrity of the individual, Jalāl could not remain silent in the face of such cultural desecration and its accompanying political repression. He continually expressed his dissident views, commenting on and criticising his environment in articles, translations and short stories. It is, however, as a communicator of his views through the medium of longer fiction that he is most effective, and where the art of the political activist can be seen most clearly.

Linking his earlier political experiences to his wider observations of Iranian society, in *Sar Gozashte Kanduhā* and *Nun Va'l Qalam*, he resorted to an allegorical form of writing in order to express his opinions. While it was not a milieu in which he felt at ease, nonetheless the novels display the characteristic of mixing a traditional Iranian form of story telling with contemporary political commentary. While *Sar Gozashte Kanduhā* is an early work, and contains a simple allegory of the nationalisation of oil, *Nun Va'l Qalam* contains his mature views on government and individual corruption, the

2 Stendhal, *Scarlet and Black*, Penguin, 1969, p.390.

hypocrisy of the Tudeh Party, and his concept of the responsibility and integrity of the writer.

However, resistance through realism was, for Jalâl, a more satisfactory form of expression. *Modire Madraseh* and *Nefrine Zamin* form urban and rural counterparts in Jalâl's fictionalised presentation of his own experiences. In *Modire Madraseh*, the problems and frustrations of working within the system are powerfully portrayed. The book is a personal statement, a condemnation of the system, and an immediate emotional response to a real experience. The Headmaster's resignation in disgust indicates Jalâl's own feelings towards the system in which he was forced to live. *Nefrine Zamin* is a longer and more comprehensive view of rural society undergoing the strains of westernisation, and which, in addition to describing the advance effects of the introduction of technology and in particular the land reform, indicates Jalâl's commitment to a form of modernisation based upon rural traditional society; a '*bâzgasht beh âb o khâk*' which was not a retreat into rural obscurity, but was to form the basis of modernisation and progress. The novel in addition portrays the role of the committed intellectual in mediating between the modern and the traditional.

In his opposition to the developments of contemporary Iranian society, and to the Pahlavi governments, Jalâl was not a revolutionary in the sense of calling openly for an armed uprising against the regime. Although he was in contact with some younger revolutionaries in the late 1960's, (introduced by Gholâm Hosseyn Sa'edi) and he encouraged them as part of the opposition movement, there is no evidence that he was personally

involved in revolutionary activities. At the same time he was aware of the possibility of armed insurrection being the only way to remove a firmly entrenched western backed regime, and essentially agreed with Maleki that the establishment in Iran could be expected to resist the progressive forces with all the means at its disposal, including ultimately arms, in order to prolong its existence. While the logic of this view argues that such entrenched resistance would have to be met by armed insurrection, this is not clearly stated in his published works, and he contents himself with arguing that in the face of such a regime, the people are justified in not cooperating with the government, and should oppose it continually. It is perhaps despairingly that he allows for at least the theoretical possibility of constitutional reform.

But although he may not have been a revolutionary himself, he was aware of, and participated in, the creation of his own myth as a revolutionary symbol. His image in the eyes of a disciple is clearly that of a revolutionary;

"Talk of the responsibility of the intellectual arose, and what must be done. ... Jalâl emphasised that the time of waiting is past, as is the time of talking and sloganising. These days you must at least clarify your duty to yourselves, or you must sink beneath the boiling waters or the icy waters ... The time of 'entezâr' is past". 3

and there is an apocryphal story of Jalâl distributing red roses to a crowd of youths gathered at Tabriz airport to see him off to Tehrân. The red rose (gole sokh) became a revolutionary symbol in the 1970's.

3 Puyà, No.4. 19 Khordâd 1358 (1979) p.1.

Jalāl, then, was a man of his time. Active and dissident, his was ultimately a frustrating and perhaps disappointing experience, whereby he was involved in the issues of his day, yet prevented by the political limitations set by the Pahlavi governments from influencing those issues. Thus he channelled his political activity the only way he could, - through his writings. His writings give a clear view of his personality in addition to his opinions. Emotional, cynical in observation, yet sometimes childishly idealistic in his views; honest, yet occasionally exuberantly extravagant, and, by the mid 1960's, frequently sensitive and depressed, feeling out on a limb and unable to influence events. Simin Dāneshvar has observed;

"In this spiritual state Jalāl is like a caged bird. The caged bird sings for a while, then tucks its head under its wing and creeps into a corner of its cage, not even looking at its water and grain. Suddenly it leaps up, and throws itself at the bars of the cage with its head and its wings. God let the door of the cage be open. God make the black cat sitting below no longer be there". 4

Jalāl was a man with few shades of grey. The world was either black or white, and upholding integrity and commitment, he was either for it or against it. He had little patience with a middle course. Involved in the political issues of the day, continually resisting the developments of contemporary Iranian society ruled by the Pahlavi ethos, with the weaknesses and the strengths of an ordinary person, yet with a rare emotional perception and ability to communicate, he wore himself out, dying at the age of 46 from a heart attack, and looking like an old man, bright eyed, but with pure white hair.

4 Simin Dāneshvar, Showhare Man Jalāl, Andisheh Va Honar, 5th period, No.4. p.347.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. Books by Āle Ahmad, in order of publication.

Did o Bāzdid. (Short Stories). 1324 (1945). Contains;
 Did o Bāzdid 'Eyd.
 Ganj.
 Ziyārat.
 Eftāre Bimowqe'.
 Goldāne Chini.
 Tābut.
 Sham'e Qadi.
 Tajhize Mellat.
 Postchi.
 Ma'rekeh.
 Ay Lāmāssabā. (First published in Sokhan,
 2nd period No.6. Khordād 1323 (May/June
 1944)).
 Do Mordeh.

Az Ranji Keh Mibarim. (Short Stories). Sho'levar Ābān
 1326 (October/November 1947). Contains;
 Contains;
 Darreze Khazān Zadeh.
 Zirābihā.
 Rāhe Chālus.
 Mohite Tang. (Also published in Mardome
 Māhāneh, Year 1 No.9. Khordād 1326
 (May/June 1947) pp.65-70).
 E'terāf. (Also published in Mardome Māhāneh,
 No.13, Mehr 1326 (September/October 1947)
 pp.41-44).
 Āberu Az Dast Rافته.
 Ruzhāye Khush.

Seh Tār. (Short Stories). Dey 1327, (December 1948/
 January 1949). Contains;
 Seh Tār.
 Bacheye Mardom.
 Vasvās.
 Lāke Surati. (Also published in Mardome
 Māhāneh, Year 1 No.1, Mehr 1325 (September/
 October 1946) pp.37-48.
 Vedā'.
 Zendegi Keh Gorikht. (Also published in Mardome
 Māhāneh No.15, Azar 1326 (November/December
 1947) pp.5-8.
 Aftābe Labe Bām.
 Gonāh.
 Nazdike Marzunābād.

Dahane Kaji.
 Àrezuye Qodrat.
 Ekhtelâfe Hesâb.
 Al Gemârek Va'l Makus.

Zane Ziyâdi. (Short Stories). Mordâd 1331. (July/August 1952). Contains;
 included for (Resâleye Pulus Rasul. (Also published in
 the second (Mehregân, 3rd period No.4. pp.3-4).
 edition, (Samanu Pazân. (Also published in Mâhâneye
 published (Farhang, No.1, Dey 1340 (December 1961,
 in 1342 (January 1962) pp.43-48).
 (1963) (Khânome Nazhat al Dowleh.
 Daftarcheye Bimeh.
 'Akâse Bâ Ma'refat.
 Khodâdâd Khân.
 Dozd Zadeh.
 Jâ Pâ.
 Maslul.
 Zane Ziyâdi. (Also published in Etelâ'âte
 Bânûân, 24 Mehr, 1348 (October 1969).

Owrâzân. (Monograph). Dânesht 1333, (1954).

Sar Gozashte Kanduhâ. (Fiction), Ibn Sinâ, Bahman 1333.
 (January/February 1955).

Haft Maqâleh. (Articles) 1955. Contains;
 Hedâyate Bufe Kur. (Also published in 'Elm
 o Zendegi No.1. Dey 1330 (December 1951/
 January 1952) pp.65-77.
 Moshkele Nimâ Yushij. (Also published in
 'Elm o Zendegi, No.5. Ordibehesht 1331
 (April/May 1952) pp.393-400, 467-477).
 Dar Bâreye "Âden" (W.H. Auden).
 Safarnâme'i Az Yunâne Emruz. (Also published
 in 'Elm o Zendegi, No.5. Ordibehesht 1331
 (April/May 1952) pp.401-411).
 Dar Zendânhâye Râkefeler. (Also published in
 'Elm o Zendegi No.1. Dey 1330 (December 1951/
 January 1952) pp.59-61).
 Salmâni Zanashra Koshteh.
 'Arus Dâmâde Borje Ifel.

Tâtneshinhâye Boluke Zahrâ. Dânesht. (Monograph). Mehr
 1337 (September/October 1958).

Modire Madraseh. (Fiction). 1337. (1958).

Jazireye Khârg, Dorre Yatime Khalije Fârs. (Monograph).
 Dânesht? Khordâd 1339 (May/June 1960).

Nun Va'l Qalam. (Fiction). Nil. Âbân 1340. (October/
 November 1961).

- Gharb Zadegi. (Political treatise). 1st ed. Mehr 1341 (September/October 1962). 2nd revised ed. Ravâq. n.d. probably late 1977.
- Seh Maqâleye Digar. (Articles). Esfand 1341 (February/March 1963). Contains;
 Varshegastegiye Matbu'ât. (First published in Havâdârâne 'Elm o Zendegi, No.3. Farvardin 1338 (March/April 1959) pp.1-18).
 Chand Nokteh Dar Bâreye Khat Va Zabâne Farsi. (First published in Havâdârâne 'Elm o Zendegi, No.7. Farvardin 1339, (March/April 1960).
 Belabshuye Ketâbhâye Darsi. (First published in Havâdârâne 'Elm o Zendegi, No.10. Âbân 1339 (October/November 1960) pp.28-42).
- Yek Châh Va Do Châleh. (Autobiography). Ravâq. 1343 (1964). Contains;
 Masalan Sharhe Ahvâlât. (Also published in Jahâne Now 24. 1348 (1969) pp.4-8).
- Arzyâbiye Shetâbzadeh. (Articles). Esfand 1343 (February/March 1965). Contains;
 Serkeye Naqd Yâ Halvâye Târikh.
 Moqadame'i Keh Dar Khure Qadre Bolande Shâ'er Nabud.
 Ketâbi Dar Siyâsat Va Daftare She'ri ...
 Nimâ Digar She'r Nakhwâhad Goft.
 Pire Mard Chashme Mâ Bud. (Also published in Ârash No.2. Dey 1340 (December 1961/January 1962) pp.65-75).
 Chand Nokteh Dar Bâreye Moshakhasâte Koliye Adabiyâte Mo'âser. (Also published in Mâhâneye Farhang, No.2. Bahman 1340, (January/February 1962)).
 Yek Goftoguye Darâz. (Also published in Andisheh Va Honar 5th period No.4. pp.387-408).
 Dâstâyeveski Va Nihilism Va 'Âqebatash.
 Yâd Dâsht Dar Bâreye Namâyeshe "Goldân".
 Setâyeshe Khojasteh Az Daryâ Va Nefrinash Beh Âhan.
 Vincenzo Biangini - Tabib - Naqâsh.
 Beh Mohases Va Barâye Divâr.
 Safari Beh Shahre Bâdgirhâ. (Also published in Andisheh Va Honar 3, Shahrivar 1337 (August/September 1958) pp.18-30).
 Gozâreshe Haftomin Kongereye Mardomshenâsi.
 Negâhi Beh "Tarze 'Amale Mazhab Dar Irân".
 Mehregân Dar Mashhade Ardehâl. (Also published in Andisheh Va Honar 5. pp.711-716).
 Mahâtmâ Gândi.
 Chand Kalameh Bâ Mashâtehâ.
 Mosâhebeye Kutâh.

- Khasi Dar Miqât. (Travelogue). Nil. Mehr 1345 (September/October 1966).
- Nefrine Zamin. (Fiction). Nil. Dey 1346 (December 1967/January 1968). The following chapters were published separately;
 Vorud Beh Deh. In Andisheh Va Honar, Dey 1338 (December 1959/January 1960).
 Mo'alem Va Darvish. In Ārash 2nd period No.1.
 Saghâ Va Gorghâ. In Ārash 2nd period No.1, and in Andisheh Va Honar, 5th period No.4. pp.374-379.
- Kârnâme-ye Seh Sâleh. (Articles). Ketâbe Zamân, n.d. probably 1968? Contains;
 Khordeh Bar Dâst.
 Kârnâme-ye Do Mâheh 1.
 Āyine Fasî. (Also published in Payâme Novin, Vol.7, No.9, pp.37-42).
 Goftogu Bâ Yek Farangi. (Also published in Jahâne Now. No.1. Khordâd 1345 (May/June 1966)).
 Gozâreshi Az Khuzestân.
 Kârnâme-ye Do Mâhe-ye Hârvârd.
 Bizhan Va Manizheh.
 Kârnâme-ye Do Mâheh 2.
 Goftoguyê Darâz Bâ Dâneshtjuyâne Tabriz.
 Soluki Dar Harj o Marj. (Also published in Ārash 2, No.2 Esfand 1346 (February/March 1968)).
 Gozari Beh Hâshiyeye Kavir. (Also published in 'Olume Ejtemâ'i, 1st period, No.1. Autumn 1347 (1968) pp.98-108).
- Panj Dâstân. (Short Stories). Dey 1349 (December/January 1971). Contains;
 Goldastehâ Va Falak. (Also published in Ārash 2, No.1. Bahman 1346 (January/February 1968)).
 Jashne Farkhondeh. (Also published in Ārash No.1. Āban 1340 (October/November 1961) pp.15-29).
 Khwâharam Va 'Ankabut.
 Showhare Amrikâ'i. (Also published in Jahâne Now, Ābân 1345 (October/November 1966)).
 Khunâbâye Anâr. (Also published in Keyhâne Mâh No.2. Shahrivar 1341 (August/September 1962) pp.147-151).
 Masalan Sharhe Ahvâlât.
- Dar Khedmat Va Khiyânate Rowshanfekrân. (Political Survey). Khwârazmi 1352 (1978) 2 Vols. The following chapters were published separately;
 Rowshanfekr Chist? Rowshanfekr Kist? In Jahâne Now, No's.4-5. Shahrivar - Mehr 1345 (September 1966) pp.15-32.

Rowshanfekr Khodist Yâ Bigâneh? In Jahân
Now, No's.6-7. Ābân 1345 (November
1966) pp.89-112.

Sangi Bar Guri. (Autobiography). Ravâq. 1360 (1981).

The following works are updated compilations, published in
1970's;

Esrâ'il, 'Amele Empiriyâlist. (Political comment). Kârevân.
Nâmehâ. (Letters). With an introduction by 'Ali Asghar
Hâj Sayyed Javâdi.

B. Translations by Āle Ahmad, in order of publication.

'Azâdârihâye Nâ Mashru'. Tehrân 1944.

Qomârbâz. (The Gambler, Dostoevsky, Ma'refat, Ābân 1327
(October/November 1948).

Bigâneh. (The Outsider, Albert Camus). With Khobrezâdeh.
Ma'refat 1328 (1949).

Su'e Tafâhom. (Cross Purpose, Albert Camus). Ma'refat,
Esfand 1329 (February/March 1951).

Dasthâye Āludeh. (Crime Passionel, J.P. Sartre). Ābân
1331 (October/November 1952).

Bâzgasht Az Showravi. (Back from the USSR, Andre Gide).
Niruye Sevvom, Mordâd 1333 (July/August
1954).

'Obur Az Khat. (Across the Line, E. Junger). With
Dr. M. Human. 1341 (1962). Also pub-
lished in Ketâbe Mâh No.1 pp.5-16.
Keyhâne Mâh No.2. pp.85-119.

Mâ'edehâye Zamini. (Fruits of the Earth, Andre Gide). With
Parviz Dâriyush. 1343 (1964).

Karkadan. (Rhinoceros, E. Ionesco). 1343 (1966).

Chehel Tuti. With Simin Dâreshvar. Mowj 1351 (1972). Also
published in Yaghmâ, 18th Period 1344
(1965).

Teshnegi Va Gashnegi. (Thirst and Hunger, Ionesco). With
M. Hazârkhanî. 1351 (1972).

C. Articles by Āle Ahmad, in order of publication.

- Tahqiḡe Zabāne Fārsi Dar Showravi, translated from
M. Kiakonov. Sokhan, 2nd Year No.8.
Shahrivar 1324 (August/September 1945)
pp.599-604.
- Various book reviews in Mardome Māhāneh between 1946 and
1947.
- Iraj Eskandari. (Biographical note). Mardome Māhāneh
No.1. Mehr 1325 (September/October
1946) pp.14-16.
- Nur al Din Alamuti. (Biographical note). Ibid. pp.16-18.
- Mohammad Bahrāmi. (Biographical note). Ibid. pp.19-21.
- Ghorure Mā. Ibid. p.48.
- Ardeshir (Ovānessiyān). (Biographical note). Mardome
Māhāneh No.2. Ābān 1325 (October/
November 1946) pp.40-43.
- Rezā Rādmanesh. (Biographical note). Ibid. pp.44-46.
- Feridun Keshāvarz. (Biographical note). Ibid. pp.47-50.
- 'Ali Amir Khizi. (Biographical note). Mardome Māhāneh
No.3. Āzār 1325 (November/December
1946) pp.38-40.
- Mahmud Boqrāti. (Biographical note). Ibid. pp.41-43.
- 'Abdol Samad Kāmbakhsh. (Biographical note). Ibid.
pp.43-46.
- Afsāneye Nimā Yushij. Irāne Mā. Tir-Azar 1329.
- Āden, Shā'ere Motaraqiye Englisi. 'Elm o Zendegi No.3.
Esfand 1330 (February/March 1952)
pp.227-230.
- Chand Kalameh Az Miyāne Gowd. 'Elm o Zendegi. Noruz 1332.
(Spring 1953) pp.3-4.
- Nāmeye Āle Ahmad Khetāb Beh Nimā. Niruye Sevvom Haftegi,
29 Khordād 1332 (June 1953).
- Masjede Jadide Qom. Havādārāne 'Elm o Zendegi No.3.
Farvardin 1338 (March/April 1959)
pp.60-63.

- Kârgari Beh Khelâfe Moqararât Nâhie'irâ Abâd Mikonad Va Zendâni Mishavad. Havâdârâne 'Elm o Zendegi No.4. Khordâd 1338 (May/June 1959) pp.83-88.
- Mofâvezeye Mowlânâ 'Aqil Va Janâbe Doktor Âlâmad. Andisheh Va Honar No.9. Farvardin 1339 (March/April 1960).
- Chand Kalameh Dar Bâreya Âlber Kâmu. Havâdârâne 'Elm o Zendegi No.7. Farvardin 1339 (March/April 1960) p.43.
- Hemmati Badraqeye Râh Kon. Ketâbe Mâh. n.d. pp.3-4.
- Interview with Mohandes Seyhun. Ârash, Âzar 1341 (November/December 1962) pp.47-50.
- Introduction to Fashandak, No.1 of Daftarhâye Munugrâfi, University of Tehrân 1341 (1962).
- Eshâreya Besyâr Dir Âmadeh Bar "Lahjeye Râmand". Farhange Irân Zamin, No.12. 1343 (1964) pp.323-329.
- Velâyate Esrâ'il. Andisheh Va Honar, 5th Period, No.4. pp.380-386.
- Do Nâmeh. Ibid. pp.362-373.
- Letter. Bâzâr. Year 17, No.841. 20 Mehr 1345 (October 1966).
- Safare Rus. Honar Va Sinemâ. No.1. 18 Âzar 1345 (December 1966).
- Yâd Dâsht. Ârash, No.16. Farvardin 1347 (March/April 1968) pp.14-16.
- Samad Va Afsâneya 'Avâm. Ârash, No.18, Âzar 1347 (November/December 1968) pp.3-12.
- Yâd Bude Nimâ Yushij. Ârash 2. No.4. Esfand 1347, (February/March 1969) pp.97-103.
- Tarhe Pishnahâdi Barâye Tahiyye Yek Gozâreshe Kâmel Az Tabriz. With G.H. Sâ'edi, S. Behrangi, and B. Dowlatâbâdi. Sahand, Daftare Avval. Spring 1349 (1970).

D. Unpublished works.

Nasle Jadid. (Novel).

Safare Rus. (Travelogue).

*Safare Amrikà'i. (Travelogue).

Yâd Dâshthâye Ruzâneh. (Daily Diaries).

E. English translations of Āle Ahmad.

The Pilgrimage. (Ziyârat) Translated by H.D.G. Law. Life and Letters 63, December 1949, pp.202-209.

The Old Man was our Eyes. (Pire Mard Chashme Mâ Bud) Translated by T.R. Ricks. The Literary Review, Fall 1974, pp.115-128.

The School Principal. (Modire Madraseh) Translated by J.K. Newton. Bibliotheca Islamica, 1974.

The Flower Vase. (Goldâne Chini) Translated by M.C. Hillman⁷, in the introduction to The School Principal, op.cit.

The Mobilisation of Iran. (Tajhize Mellat) Translated by D.C. Champagne, in Literature East and West, Vol.20. 1976, introduction by M.C. Hillman⁷, pp.61-70.

What are the University and Education Doing? (Chapter from Gharb Zadegi) Translated by M.C. Hillman⁷, Ibid. pp.174-177.

Somebody Else's Child. (Bacheye Mardom) Translated by T.S. Gouchenour. Iranian Studies 1, 1968 pp.155-162.
Also translated by A.R. Navâpbur and Robert Wells, Iron, Autumn 1979.

My Sister and the Spider. (Khwâharam Va 'Ankabut) Translated by A.R. Navâpbur and Robert Wells, Iranian Society; An Anthology of Writing by Jalâl Āle Ahmad, Spring 1982.

Pink Varnish. (Lâke Surati) and Customs and Exise
(Al Gemârek Va'l Makus) translated by
A.R. Navâpbur and Robert Wells, Literature
and Society in Iran, Iranian Studies,
Summer 1982.

F. Persian and other books and pamphlets.

Âdamiyat, F; Andishehâye Mirzâ Fath'ali Âkhundzâdeh. Tehrân
1349 (1970).

_____ ; Ide'oloziye Nazhate Mashrutiyyate Irân. Payâm
2535 (1976).

_____ ; Andishehâye Mirzâ Âqa Khân Kermâni. Payâm 1357
(1978).

_____ ; Ashoftegi Dar Fekre Târikhi. Tehrân, n.d.
Probably 1981.

Âkhundov, Mirzâ Fath'ali; Erserli, Vol.2. Baku 1961.

Âkhundzâdeh, Mirzâ Fath'ali; Tamsilât; Shesh Namâyeshnâme
Va Yek Dâstân. Translated by M. Ja'far
Qarâjedâghi. Khwârazmi 1356 (1977).

Alavi, B; Geschichte Und Entwicklung Der Modernen Persischen
Literatur. Akademie Verlag, Berlin 1964.

_____ ; Panjâh o Seh Nafar. Amir Kabir 1357 (1978).

Âryânpur, Y; Az Sabâ Tâ Nimâ. 2 Vols. 2nd ed. Tehrân 1351
(1972).

Âshuri, D; Gashthâ. Tehrân 1357 (1978).

Barâheni, R; Qesseh Nevisi. 2nd ed. Tehrân 1969.

_____ ; Zelollah. Abjad, 1354 (1975).

_____ ; Dar Enghelâbe Irân Cheh Shodeh Ast Va Cheh Khwâhad
Shod. Zamân 1358 (1979).

Behrangi, S; Mâhe Siyâhe Kuchulu. Tehrân 1347 (1968).

Celine, L.F; Voyage au bout de la Nuit. Paris 1932.

Chubak, S; Cherâghe Âkher. 'Elmi 1345 (1966).

Dehkhodâ, A.A, Charand Parand. Book Distribution Centre,
Texas, 1977.

Ehteshâmi, A; Bâzigarâne Siyâsat. Tehrân 1328. (1949).

Fâteh, M; Panjâh Sâle Nafte Irân. Chehr 1335 (1956).

- Foruzānfar, Badi'al Zamān; Sharhe Masnaviye Sharif.
University of Tehrān Publications 1146/1-2.
Vol.1 Tehrān 1346 (1967), Vol.2 Tehrān 1347
(1968).
- Ghani, Q; Tārikhe Tasavvof Dar Eslām. Vol.2 of Bahs Dar
Āsār Va Afkār Va Ahvāle Hāfez. Ibn Sinā 1330
(1952).
- Hātem Tā'i; Koliyāte Ketābe Dāstāne Shirin Ebārate Hātem
Tā'i. Sherkate Nesbiye Kānune Ketāb. n.d.
- Hedāyat, S and Farzād, M; Vagh Vagh Sāhāb. Amir Kabir,
1341 (1962).
- Hezbe Tudeh; Dar Rāhe Yek Enherāf. Tehrān 1326 (1947).
- Hezbe Zahmatkeshāne Mellate Irān; Niruye Sevvom Piruz
Mishavad. Tehrān 1330 (1951).
_____; Dar Barābare Bozorgtarin Āzmāyeshe Tārikh.
Tehrān 1330 (1951).
_____; Niruye Sevvom Chist? Tehrān 1330 (1951).
_____; Niruye Moharakeye Tārikh. Bahman 1330 (January/
February 1952).
- Honari, M; Owsungun, Afsānehāye Mardome Khur. Ministere de
la Culture Des Arts. Centre des Recherches
Ethnologique et des Traditions Populaires.
Tehrān 1352 (1973).
- Ibn Soltān Malekshāhe Maghrebi Va Jahāngir Ibne Shiruiye;
Koliyāte Shāhzādeh Shiruiye. 'Elmi, n.d.
- Irāniyān, J; Vāqe'iyate Ejtemā'i Va Jahāne Dāstān. Amir
Kabir 1358 (1979).
- Ishaq, E; Cheh Bāyad Kard. Tehrān 1324 (1945).
- Jāmi; Gozashteh - Cherāghe Rāhe Āyandeh Ast. Front for the
liberation of the Iranian People, n.d.
- Jemālzādeh, M.A; Yeki Bud Yeki Nabud. Kāviyāni, 1921.
- Kānune Nevisandegān; Dah Shab. Tehrān 1357 (1978).
_____; Nāmeh, No.1. Āgāh 1358 (1979).
- Kasravi, A; Tārikhe Mashruteye Irān. Amir Kabir 1978.
- Kātuziān, H; Khāterāte Siyāsiye Khalile Maleki. Ravāq, 1981.
- Keshāvarz, F; Man Motahem Mikonam Komiteye Markaziye Hezbe
Tudeye Irānrā. Ravāq, 2nd ed. 1357 (1978).
- Kiyā, S; Noqtaviyān Yā Pasikhāniyān. Tehrān 1320 (1941).
- Maleki, K; Hezbe Tudeye Irān Sare Dorāh. Tehrān 1326 (1947).

- Maleki, K; Do Ravesh Barāye Yek Hadaḡ. Tehrān 1326 (1948).
 _____; Bar Khorde 'Aqāyed Va Ārā Beyne Niruye Sevvom Va Hezbe Tudeh. n.d.
- Marāghe'i Zeyn ol 'Ābedin; Siyāhatnāmeḡ Ebrāhim Beg. Habl ol Matin, Calcutta 1910.
- Mir Ahmadi, M; Analyse Der Werke Gelal Ale Ahmad unter Berucksichtigung Socialer Aspekte. Friern Universitat Berlin 1977.
- Mo'meni, B; Ru Dar Ru. Shahābang 2536 (1977).
- Nakhostin Kongereye Nevisandegāne Irān. Tehrān 1325 (1946).
- Oshkuri, K.S; Afsānehāye Oshkure Bālā. Ministere de la Culture des Arts. Centre des Recherches Ethnologique et des Traditions Populaires. Tehrān 1352 (1973).
- Pishdād, A; Dahomin Sālmarge Khalil Maleki. Tehrān 1358 (1979).
- Ruznāmeḡ Omid; Chand Pardeh Az Zendegāniye Rejāleḡ Ma'rufe Irān. Tehrān 1324 (1945).
- Sā'edi, G.H; 'Azādārāne Bayal. Nil 1344 (1965).
 _____; Āye Bi Kolāh Āye Bā Kolāh. Nil 1346 (1967).
 _____; Chub Beh Dasthāye Varazil. Morvārid 1354 (1975).
- Safā, Z; Asrār al Tawhid fi Maqāmat al Sheykh Abu Sa'id. Tehrān 1953.
- Sepānlu, M.A; Bāz Āferine Vāge'iyat. Zamān 1349 (1970).
- Shādeman, F; Taskhire Tamadone Farangi. Tehrān 1326 (1947).
- Tabātabā'i, M. (ed.); Majmu'eye Āsāre Mirzā Malkom Khān. Tehrān 1327 (1948).
- Tabrizi, H. (ed.); Jalāl Āle Ahmad, Mardi Dar Keshākeshe Tārikhe Mo'āser. Kāveh, Tabriz, 1357 (1978).

G. Persian articles and newspapers.

- Afshār, I; Daftarhāye Munugrāfi. Rāhnāmāye Ketāb Vol.6. 1342 (1963) pp.773-776.
- Āghdāshlu; Negāhi Do Bāreh Beh Tārikh. Andisheh Va Honar, 5th period No.4. pp.449-463.

- 'Alā, Esmā'il Nuri; Ma'nāye "Ejtemā'i - Siyāsi" Neveshtane Ketābe Gharb Zadegi. Nāmeye Kānune Nevisandegāne Irān, No.1. Bahār 1358 (1979) pp.245-253.
- Āle Ahmad, Shams; Matne Sokhanrāniye Shams Āle Ahmad. Dah Shab, Kānune Nevisandegān, 1357 (1978) pp.117-119.
- _____ ; Jalāl Ostureye Moqāvamat Va Ta'hod. Puyā No.3. 12 Khordād 1358 (1979) pp.1-4.
- _____ ; Jalāl Beh Marge Tabi'i Namord. Puyā No.4. 19 Kordād 1358 (1979) pp.2-5.
- Andisheh Va Honar; Special edition on Jalāl Āle Ahmad. 5th period No.4.
- Āshuri, D; Hushyāriye Tārikhi. Barrasiye Ketāb Esfand 1345 (1967) pp.20-33.
- _____ ; Mardi Bar Khenge Tiz Pāye Qalam. Negin No.148, 13th Year Shahrivar 2536 (1977) pp.18-22.
- _____ ; Jalāl Āle Ahmad. Ārash No.6. Shahrivar 1360 (1981) pp.76-88.
- Āyandegān; Vasiyatnāme'i Pas Az Safar. Āyandegān, 7 Mehr 1348 (September 1969).
- Āzād, M; Nastaranhāye Hamsāyeh Va Qesseye Qessegu. Andisheh Va Honar 5th period No.4. pp.344-361.
- Bahār, S; Modire Madraseh Va Nun Va'l Qalam Va Jalāl Āle Ahmad. Ibid. pp.490-504.
- Bāmdād; Special editions on Jalāl Āle Ahmad. 19 Shahrivar 1358, 22 Shahrivar 1358 (September 1979).
- Barāheni, R; Jalāl Āle Ahmad, Shojā'at Va Sharāfate Qalam. Bāmdād 19 Shahrivar 1358 (September 1979).
- Behnām, J; Tātreshinhāye Boluke Zahrā. Rāhnamāye Ketāb. 2nd Year No.2. 1338 (1959) pp.209-212.
- Dāneshvar, S; Showhare Man Jalāl. Andisheh Va Honar 5th period No.4. pp.347-358.
- _____ ; Ghorube Jalāl. Ārash No.6. Shahrivar 1360 (August/September 1981) pp.47-66.
- 'Elm o Zendegi; From Dey 1330 (December 1951) to Esfand 1340 (February 1962).
- Etelā'āt; Panjshambeh 14th Ābān 1332. (November 1953).
- Fathi, K; Jalāl Āle Ahmad. Kāveh. 7th Year Āzar 1348 (1969) pp.336-340.
- Forsi, B; Nun Va'l Qalam. Māhāneye Farhang No.4. Farvardin 1341 (1962) pp.97-99.
- Golshiri, H; Negāhiye Digar Beh Nasre Mo'āsere Irān. Irānshahr. No.11, pp.6-8.

- Javâdi, 'Ali Asghar Hâj Sayyed; Do Surate Târikhiye Emperiyâlisme Asre Mâ. 'Elm o Zendegi Year 2 No.1. Noruz 1332 (1953) pp.4-16.
- Jamâlzâdeh, M.A; Modire Madraseh. Râhnamâye Ketâb, No.2. Year 1 1337 (1958) pp.167-178.
- Jomhuriye Eslâmi; Special edition on Jalâl Âle Ahmad. 29 Shahrivar 1358 (September 1979).
- Ketâbe Mâhe Keyhân. No.1. n.d. No.2. Shahrivar 1341 (August/September 1962).
- Keyhân; 10th Anniversary of the death of Jalâl Âle Ahmad. 14th Shahrivar 1358 (September 1979).
- Kiyânush, M; Âle Ahmad Dar Dâstânhâye Kutâhash. Andisheh Va Honar, 5th Period No.4. pp.465-484.
- Mahjub, M.J; Darre Yatime Khaliy (Jazireye Khârg). Râhnamâye Ketâb 3, pp.723-736.
- Malek, H; Râhe Hale Rezhime Hâzer Barâye Eslâhâte Arzi Chist? Va Cheh B âyad Bâshad? Havâdârâne 'Elm o Zendegi No.4. Khordâd 1338 (May/June 1959) pp.1-25.
 _____; Eslâhâte Arzi Ya'ni Taghyire Rezhime Mâlekiyate Arbâb Va Ra'iyat. Ibid, No.5. Dey 1338 (December 1959/January 1960) pp.1-19.
 _____; Zarurat Va Sharâyete Eslâhe Arzi Qâbele Entebâq Bâ Sharâyete Emruze Irân. Ibid. No.6. Bahman 1338 (January/February 1960) pp.1-33.
 _____; Eslâhe Râbeteye Mâlek Va Ra'iyat Ibid. No.10. Âbân 1339 (October/November 1960) pp.64-73.
- Maleki, K; Jâme'eye Susiyâlisthâye Irân. Nabarde Zendegi, Year 1. No.10. Ordibehesht 1335 (April/May 1956) pp. 3-13.
 _____; Az Enherâf Nist. Havâdârâne Nabarde Zendegi 8. Ordibehesht 1339 (April/May 1960) pp.1-13.
- Mardome Mâhâneh; From Mehr 1325 (September 1946) to Bahman 1327 (January 1949).
- Melâh, K; Sowgi Bar Jalâl; Jahâne Now, Year 24, No.3. Mordâd-Shahrivar 1348 (September 1969) pp.1-8.
- Mir Sâdeqi, J; Negâhiye Kutâh Beh Dâstân Nevisiye Mo'âsere Irân. Sokhan, 26th Period, No.9. Shahrivar 1357 (August/September 1968) pp.913-931.
- Modares Sâdeqi, J; Kudaki Bâ Zabân Va 'Aqle Yek Marde Bozorg. Âyandegân 21st Shahrivar 1356 (September 1977).
- Mo'meni, B; Sânsur Va 'Avâreze Nâshi Az Ân. Dah Shab, op.cit. pp.253-265.
- Ovânessiyân, A; Mahâsen Va Ma'âyebe Hezbe Mâ. Mardome Mâhâneh Âbân 1325 (October/November 1946) pp.88-97 Year 1 No.2.

- Rādmanesh, R; Siyāsate Mā. Ibid. pp.1-5.
- Rahimi, M; Jalāl Digar Nakhwāhad Nevesht. Jahāne Now 22, No.3. 1348 (1969) pp.9-11.
- Rowshanfekr; Pā Chenār Mesle Hamisheh Nabud. Majaleye Rowshanfekr. 27th Shahrivar 1348 (September 1968) p.8.
- Tabari, E; Rāze Kāmyāb. Mardome Māhāneh, Bahman 1325 (January/February 1947) Year 1 No.5. pp.1-4.
 _____; Hezb Chist? Ibid. Year 1 No.9. Khordād 1326 (May/June 1947) pp.1-10.
 _____; Dar Bāreye Enteqād Va Māhiyate Honar Va Zibāye Honar. Ibid. No.11. Shahrivar 1326 (August/September 1947) pp.11-35.
- Tāhbāz, S; Āle Ahmad Dar Dāstānhāye Kutāhash, Andisheh Va Honar, 5th Period, No.4. pp.485-489.
- Tehrāni, M; Dāstāne 'Kutāh' Va 'Boland' Dar In Sare Zamin. Ārash Vol.1. No.7. pp.141-153.
- Vosuqi, N; Jahānbini Va Payāmash. Andisheh Va Honar, 5th Period No.4. pp.431-448.
 _____; Az Owrāzān Tā Khārg. Ibid. pp.420-430.
 _____; Yāde Ān Keh Namāyad. Ibid. Book 6 No.4. Mehr 1348 (September 1969) pp.1-4.
- Yār Shāter, E; Tātreshihāye Boluke Zahrā, Rāhnamāye Ketāb 2. pp.212-214.
- Yushij, Nimā; Pāsekhe Nimā Beh Āle Ahmad. Jaras 26 Tir 1332 (1953).
- Zhadonov, A.A; Mas'uliyate Nevisandegāne Showravi. Mardome Māhāne, Mordād 1326 (July/August 1947) pp.23-34.

H. English books and theses.

- Abrahamian, E.V; Social Bases of Iranian Politics; The Tudeh Party, 1941-1953. Ph.D. Thesis, Columbia University, 1969.
- Akhavi, S; Religion and Politics in Contemporary Iran. S.U.N.Y. 1980.
- Algar, H; Mirzā Maldom Khān. University of California Press. 1973.
- Amuzegar, J. and Fekrat, M.A; Iran, Economic Development under Dualistic Conditions. University of Chicago, 1971.

- Antoun, R.T. and Harik, I; Rural Politics and Social Change in the Middle East. Indiana University Press, 1972.
- Arasteh, A.R; Education and Social Awakening in Iran, 1850-1968. Brill. 1969.
- Avery, P; Modern Iran, Benn. 1965.
- Banani, A; The Modernisation of Iran, 1921-41. Stanford University Press, 1977.
- Baraheni, R; The Crowned Cannibals. Vintage, 1977.
- Bernstein, H; (ed.); Underdevelopment and Development. Penguin, 1973.
- Bharier, J; Economic Development in Iran 1900-1970. O.U.P. 1971.
- Bill, J.A; The Politics of Iran, Groups, Classes and Modernisation. Bell and Howell, 1972.
- Binder, L; Iran; Political Development in a Changing Society. University of California Press, 1962.
- Blackham, H.J; Six Existentialist Thinkers. Routledge, Kegan Paul; 1978.
- Bosworth, C.E; Iran and Islam. Edinburgh University Press. 1974.
- Braun, L; Witness of Decline, Albert Camus. A.U.P. 1974.
- Bree, G; Camus and Sartre. Calder and Boyers, 1974.
- Browne, E.G; The Persian Revolution of 1905-1909. Cambridge. 1910.
- _____ ; Press and Poetry of Modern Persia. Cambridge, 1914.
- _____ ; A Literary History of Persia. 4 Vols. Fisher Unwin 1906, 1909. Cambridge 1928, 1930.
- Chelkowski, P; Iran, Continuity and Variety. New York University Press. 1971.
- Coe, R.N; Ionesco. Methuen 1971.
- Cook, M.A. (ed.); Studies in the Economic History of the Middle East. Oxford University Press. 1970.
- Cottam, R.W; Nationalism in Iran. University of Pittsburgh. 1964.
- Danto, A.C; Sartre. Fontana, 1975.
- Elwell Sutton, L.P; Modern Iran. Routledge and Sons, 1941.
- _____ ; Persian Oil. Lawrence and Wishart, 1955.

- Fischer, M.J.J; Iran from Religious Dispute to Revolution. Harvard 1980.
- Fowlie, W; Andre Gide, his Life and Art. MacMillan, New York 1965.
- Graham, R; Iran, the Illusion of Power. Croom Helm 1978.
- Ha'eri, A.H; Shiism and Constitutionalism in Iran. Brill, 1977.
- Halabi, A.A; The Development of Humour and Satire in Persia with Special Reference to 'Ubaid Zākāni. Ph.D. Thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1980.
- Heidegger, M; Existence and Being. Introduction by W. Brook. Vision. 1963.
- Hobson, J.A; Imperialism. London 1902.
- Kamshad, H; Modern Persian Prose Literature. Cambridge 1966.
- Katuzian, H; The Political Economy of Modern Iran, 1926-1979. New York University Press, 1981.
- Keddie, N; Religion and Politics in Iran. Cass. 1966.
- _____; An Islamic Response to Imperialism. University of California Press. 1968.
- _____; Sayyid Jamal al-Din "al-Afghani", A Political Biography. University of California 1972.
- _____; Scholars, Saints and Sufis. University of California Press. 1972.
- _____; Iran, Religion, Politics and Society. Cass. 1980.
- Keyvani, M; Artisans and Guild Life in the Later Safavid Period. University of Durham Ph.D. Thesis, 1980.
- Lambton, A.K.S; The Persian Land Reform, 1962-1966. Oxford University Press. 1969.
- Lenin, V.I; Imperialism, the Highest Stage of Capitalism. London 1916.
- Lukas, G; The Meaning of Contemporary Realism. Merlin 1969.
- McCarthy, P; Celine. Allen Lane, 1975.
- Malik, C; God and Man in Contemporary Islamic Thought. American University of Beirut. 1972.
- Malinowski, B; A Scientific Theory of Culture and Other Essays. University of North Carolina. 1944.
- Matthews, J.H; The Inner Dream, Celine as a Novelist. Syrecuse University Press. 1978.
- Murdoch, I; Sartre. Bowes, 1953.

- Navâbpur, A.R; A Study of Recent Persian Prose Fiction
with Special Reference to the Social Background.
Durham University Ph.D. Thesis, 1981.
- Pahlavi, M.R; The White Revolution. Tehrân 1967.
- Painter, G.D; Andre Gide. Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1968.
- Pickthall, M; The Meaning of the Glorious Koran. Mentor.
1953.
- Radcliffe Brown, A.R; A Natural Science of Society. Free
Press of Glencoe. 1964.
- Readers Bible, London, 1951.
- Rypka, J; History of Iranian Literature, Reidal. 1968.
- Sartre, J.P; What is Literature? Introduction by D. Cate.
Methuen 1978.
- Stendhal; Scarlet and Black. Penguin 1969.
- Thomas, M; Louis-Ferdinand Celine. Faber 1979.
- Warnock, M; The Philosophy of Sartre. Hutchinson 1965.
- Willhoite, F.H; Beyond Nihilism. Louisiana State University
Press. 1968.
- Yar Shater, E; Iran Faces the 70's. Praeger. 1972.
- Zabih, S; The Communist Movement in Iran. University of
California Press. 1966.
- Zonis, M; The Political Elite of Iran. Princeton, 1971.

I. English articles.

- Abrahamian, E.V; Communism and Communalism in Iran; The Tudeh
and the Firqah-i-Dimukrat. International
Journal of Middle East Studies. Vol.1. (1970)
pp.291-316.
- _____ ; Factionalism in Iran; Political Groups in the 14th
Parliament (1944-46). Middle Eastern Studies.
Vol.14. No.1. January 1978. pp.22-55.
- Algar, H; Oppositional Role of the Ulema in 20th Century Iran.
In N. Keddie, Scholars, Saints and Sufis,
pp.231-255.

- Arasteh, R; Some Problems of Education in Underdeveloped Countries. Middle East Journal 12 No.3. 1958 pp.270-275.
- Arjomand, S.A; Sufism and Sunnism in Safavid Iran. Journal of Asian Hisotry, Vol.15 No.1. 1981 pp.1-35.
- Ashraf, A; Historical Obstacles to the Development of a Bourgeoisie in Iran. In M.A. Cook, Studies in the Economic History of the Middle East. pp.308-332.
- Bausani, A; Europe and Iran in Contemporary Persian Literature. East and West, Vol.11 No.1. March 1960 pp.3-14.
- Bill, J.A; Modernisation and Reform from Above, the Case of Iran. Journal of Politics 32, February 1970 pp.19-40.
- _____ ; The Dynamics of Traditional Society and Strategies of Change. Journal of International Affairs, 24. 1970 pp.309-316.
- Borocky, M; Persian Prose since 1946. Middle East Journal 7, No.2. 1953 pp.235-244.
- Cejpek, J; Iranian Folk Literature. In J. Rypka, History of Iranian Literature. pp.609-709.
- Cottam, R.W; Political Party Development in Iran. Iranian Studies, Vol.1 No.3. 1968 pp.82-95.
- _____ ; The U.S., Iran and the Cold War. Iranian Studies 3. Winter 1970 pp.2-22.
- Courtuis, V; The Tudeh Party. Indo Iranica, 1954. pp.14-22.
- Cuyler Young, T; The Problem of Westernisation in Modern Iran. Middle East Journal 2, January 1948 pp.47-59.
- _____ ; The Social Support of Current Iranian Policy. Middle East Journal 6. Spring 1952. pp.125-143.
- The Economist; Another Persia, A Survey of Iran. 31 October 1970.
- _____ ; Quiet Thee Now and Rest, A Survey of Iran. 28 August 1976.
- Elwell Sutton, L.P; Political Parties in Iran 1941-1948. Middle East Journal Vol.3. 1949, pp.45-62.
- _____ ; The Iranian Press. 1941-1947. Iran Vol.6. pp.65-104.
- _____ ; Influence of Folk Tale and Legend on Modern Persian Literature. In C.E. Bosworth. Iran and Islam. pp.247-254.
- Esfandiary, H.A; Education in Iran. Middle Eastern Affairs, No's.6-7. 1951, pp.225-228.
- Farmayan, H.F; Politics during the '60's. In E. Yar Shater, Iran Faces the '70's. pp.88-116.

- Farzan, M; Modern Persian Literature - How Good Is it?
University of Pennsylvania, Pahlavi University
Lecture Series. Spring 1966. pp.9-25.
- Floor, W.M; The Revolutionary Character of the Iranian Ulema;
Wishful Thinking or Reality? Berliner Institut
fur Vergleichende Sozialforschung. 1980.
- Hanaway, W; Formal Elements in Persian Popular Romances.
Review of National Literatures. Vol.2. Spring
1971. pp.139-160.
_____; Variety and Continuity in Popular Literature in
Iran. In P. Chelkowski, Iran, Continuity and
Variety. pp.59-75.
- Hillman, M.C; Introduction to The School Principal, trans-
lated by J.K. Newton. pp.7-32.
_____; Āle Ahmad's Fictional Legacy. Iranian Studies
Vol.9 No.4. Autumn 1976 pp.248-265.
- Jazayeri, M.A; Recent Persian Literature. Review of National
Literatures. Iran 2. Spring 1971 pp.11-28.
- Katuzian, H; The Agrarian Question in Iran. World Employment
Programme Research Working Paper. International
Labour Office, 1981.
- Keddie, N; Roots of the Ulema's Power in Modern Iran. Studia
Islamica 1969, 29, pp.31-53.
_____; Stratification, Social Control and Capitalism.
In R.T. Antoun and I. Harik, Rural Politics and
Social Change in the Middle East. pp.376-403.
_____; The Iranian Village, Before and After Land Reform.
In H. Bernstein, Underdevelopment and Development.
pp.152-174.
_____; Origins of the Religious-Radical Alliance in Iran.
In Iran, Religion, Politics and Society. pp.53-65.
_____; Iran; Change in Islam, Islam and Change. Inter-
national Journal of Middle East Studies, Vol.11
No.4. July 1980 pp.527-542.
- Kubickova, V; Persian Literature of the 20th Century. In
J. Rypka, History of Iranian Literature. pp.355-
418.
- Lambton, A.K.S; Reconsideration of the Position of the Marja'
al Taqlid. Studia Islamica 20. 1964 pp.115-135.
_____; Land Reform and the Rural Cooperatives. In E. Yar
Shater, Iran Faces the '70's. pp.5-42.
- Mahdavi, H; The Coming Crisis in Iran. Foreign Affairs XLIV,
No.1. October 1965. pp.134-146.
- Mahdi, M; Islamic Philosophy in Contemporary Islamic Thought.
In C. Malik, God and Man in Contemporary Islamic
Thought. pp.99-111.

- Millward, W.G; Traditional Values and Social Change in Iran. Iranian Studies 4. Winter 1971. pp.2-35.
- Mirjafari, H; The Haydari-Ni'mati Conflicts in Iran. Iranian Studies, 12. Summer - Autumn 1979. pp.135-162.
- Mostafi, R; Fiction in Contemporary Persian Literature. Middle Eastern Affairs. Vol.2 No's.8-9. August/September 1951. pp.273-279.
- Razi, G.H; Genesis of Party in Iran; A Case Study of the Political System and Political Parties. Iranian Studies 3. No.1. 1970. pp.58-90.
- Ricks, T.M; Contemporary Persian Literature. The Literary Review. Fall 1974. pp.4-16.
- Sabri Tabrizi, G.R; Human Values in the Works of Two Persian Writers. Correspondence d'Orient. No.11. 1970. pp.411-448.
- _____ ; Social Values in Modern Persian Literature. Bulletin of the British Association of Orientalists. Vol.8 (New Series) 1976. pp.9-16.
- Tikku, G.L; Some Socio-Religious Themes in Modern Persian Fiction. In Islam and its Cultural Divergence, Studies in Honour of G.E. Von Grunebaum. Urbana 1971. pp.165-179.
- Westwood, A.F; Elections and Politics in Iran. Middle East Journal 15. 1961. pp.397-415.
- Wickens, G.M; Persian Literature as an Affirmation of National Identity. Review of National Literatures. Vol.2 No.1. Spring 1971. pp.29-60.
- Yar Shater, E; Persian Letters in the Last Fifty Years. Middle Eastern Affairs Vol.11 No.1. November 1960.
- _____ ; The Modern Literary Idiom. In Iran Faces the '70's. pp.284-319.
- Zavarzadeh, M; The Persian Short Story Since the Second World War; An Overview. Muslim World 58. 1968. pp.308-316.